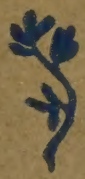
AT CHRISTMAS TIME



CHARLES·W·WENDTE

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/atchristmastime0000char



Frontispiece

AT
CHRISTMAS TIME

BY

CHARLES W. WENDTE

"Glory to God in the highest
Peace on earth to men of good will"



BOSTON
THE BEACON PRESS
25 BEACON STREET

COPYRIGHT, 1917
THE BEACON PRESS

CONTENTS

	Page
In Dedication	vii
Carol, "Gentle Jesus, Pure and Holy"	xvi
Christmas Snows at the Golden Gate	1
Carol, "Happy Christmas"	12
Christmas Joys in Fire-swept Chicago	15
Carol, "Christmas Every Day"	36
Christmas Eve in Puritan Boston	39
Carol, "Holy Night"	52
Christmas in the Trenches	55
Carol, "Child Jesus"	62
The Story of an Empty Sleeve	65
Patriotic Hymn, "My Country"	72
A New England Conscience	75
Song, "Oh, Could I Tell it"	83
With Starr King in California	85
Hymn for a Young People's Meeting	102
The Spider Boy	105



IN DEDICATION

THIS Christmas offering of song and story is affectionately dedicated to the teachers and children, past and present, of the Sunday Schools with which for threescore years and ten I have been so happily associated as pupil, organist, teacher or pastor. The list includes parishes in New England, the Middle West, and on the Pacific Coast.

The dedication, furthermore, is to all, both young and old, who may have found enjoyment and religious uplift in the Song and Service Books which, in by-gone days, with the aid of friendly helpers, I prepared for liberal Christian Sunday schools and homes — "The Sunny Side," "The Carol," "Jubilate Deo," and "Heart and Voice."

No service I may have been able to render has given me more pleasurable labor and grateful reward. Let me but help to shape the child-song of the church and I care not who frames its doctrines. To quote, with slight variation, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' beautiful sentiment —

"Full many a poet's labored lines
A century's creeping waves will hide,
The verse the children's love enshrines
Stands like the rock that breasts the tide.

Time wrecks the proudest piles we raise,
The towers, the domes, the temples fall,
The fortress crumbles and decays,
One breath of song outlasts them all."

The most fascinating Christmas story ever told is the narrative of the birth of Christ, as we read it in the Gospels. The loveliest Christmas Carol ever sung is the glad announcement of the angelic messenger: "Unto you is born this day a saviour which is Christ the Lord. . . . Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" All other Christmas stories and poems are but echoes and variants of this unparalleled original.

There are those in whom the understanding and critical faculty so predominate over their imagination and heart that they would have us abstain from using these delightful creations of the religious sentiment on the ground that they are not to be taken as sober fact and history, but as simply legend and poetry. In any case, they tell us, these naive and tender outpourings of Christian feeling in which the first generation of the disciples glorified the coming of a Messianic deliverer, and voiced their joyous hope for mankind, must be made inocuous for childhood by critical comment and warning.

I cannot feel the wisdom of such an attitude towards the Christmas legend on the part of either parents or teachers. Childhood is a period in which the imagination, the emotions, the affections are uppermost; not the reflective and reasoning faculties. Legend, fairy tale, poetry, symbolism, appeal to the heart and spiritual nature of the child, and are far more effective than arguments addressed to its logical understanding; at all events should precede the latter.

Let it be granted that to minds imbued with the critical knowledge which modern scholarship has made possible these New Testament

stories of the Nativity are no longer sober fact and history, to be literally understood and accepted for truth and doctrine. Even so they may still retain their charm and power over us as symbolic expressions of ideals, hopes and historic occurrences which are of eternal beauty and validity to the believing, worshipping heart of Christendom. Nay, we may go further and maintain that they were never intended by their authors to be a record of actual happenings; that in the Gospel stories of the advent of the Christ fact and fancy interplay with each other. They are expressed throughout in the language of poetry and symbolism. The first Christians felt very keenly the meagreness of their knowledge concerning the childlife of Jesus. Yet they recognized the importance and historic significance of these earlier and formative years of the life of the Master. Their fond imagination, lingering prayerfully over the few surviving data of the birth and infancy of Jesus, uttered itself in these lovely stories in which heaven and earth are represented as uniting in glorifying the birth of the Prince of Peace, and which under the guise of symbol and allegory veil profound spiritual and historical truths.

With such an understanding of the Gospel narratives they no longer convey to us essential theological opinions, but we are able to enjoy them in our private reading and public devotions as beautiful and touching productions of the Christian consciousness. Read in this way how full of freshness and charm and historical significance are the stories of the Nativity! Under the night heavens of Judea the simple shepherds tend their flocks, as if to symbolize the dark pall of ignorance, oppression and fear which was spread over the world at that day, and to utter the profound truth that then, as ever, the good news of religious deliverance was first revealed to the humble-hearted and simple, to men of peaceful vocation and kindly spirit. What else is meant by the opening heavens and glad announcement of a Saviour's birth, the appearance of the multitude of the heavenly host singing praises to God and prophesying blessings to mankind, but the divine assurance that heaven joins with earth in rejoicing over the birth of a redeemer and leader of mankind, and that every such prince of peace is fore-destined from his cradle to be a Messiah of the Kingdom of God on earth? In the wondering quest of the shepherds for the cradle of the new-born

Messiah, and their devout adoration of the infant redeemer, the significant fact is conveyed that it was the lowly and unlettered who became the first disciples of the new gospel. The rude surroundings of the nativity, the manger, indicating the familiarity of the Christ from very infancy with poverty and care; the meek-eyed cattle, expressive of the sympathy of the animal creation; the tender mother, type thenceforward and forever of all motherly affection, — all, to a deeper insight disclose touches of ideal purpose, and a reflective, creative art on the part of the narrators.

As we read how the wise men from the East, led by the magic star of the heathen astrology, knelt down and offered characteristic gifts of gold and costly spices to the child, it is apparent that this also is an allegorical representation of the homage which the other world religions were to pay to the new-born and Christian faith of mankind. And, last of these impressive and deeply significant pictures, the graphic portrayal of ancient Simeon in the temple, the type of Israel's prophetic hope, recognizing in the infant Jesus the long-expected Messiah of his people, and singing his swan-song of thankfulness and joy, — how plainly this is a repre-

sentation of the providential succession of the Christ and Christianity to the Jewish religion and church!

This is not actual fact and history. It was never intended to be such by its authors. It is an allegory, a parable, a poem, and should be read and used as such in our homes and churches. When this is done with reverent and understanding mind how beautiful, how fraught with high and abiding significance these gospel narratives appear to us! As a poem the New Testament Christmas story has been the inspiration of art and song for centuries. It has imparted a gentler, tenderer aspect to civilization, enriched the worship of the church, endeared the home, and made childhood forever dear and sacred to us. No stories appeal so powerfully to the devout imagination, the loving heart of the child; none so revive the child-heart in us. Therefore let us continue, like our fathers, to use and enjoy the Christmas legend in our homes and churches, but with a better understanding and deeper appreciation of the loveliest story, the sweetest poem that ever was written.

CHARLES W. WENDTE

STORIES AND SONGS

CAROL, GENTLE JESUS, PURE AND HOLY

To *Greenville*

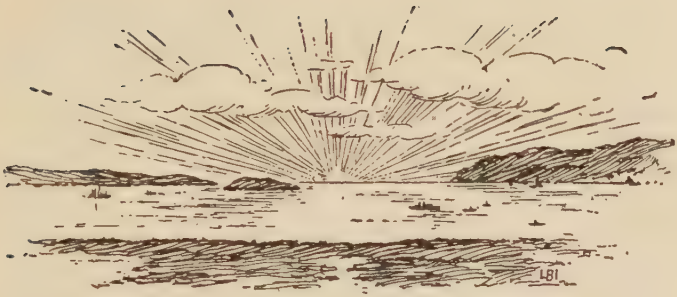
Gentle Jesus, pure and holy,
 Once thou wert a little child,
Cradled in a manger lowly,
 O'er it watched thy mother mild.
So while Mary, bending o'er thee,
 Waited for the coming morn,
Angels sang the joyous story:
 "Lo! The Prince of Peace is born!"

High in heaven's blue deep above thee,
 Rose that bright and morning star;
As the wise men knelt before thee,
 Bringing treasures from afar;
While the happy shepherds following
 Where the angels led the way,
At the shrine they knelt adoring,
 Where the babe in beauty lay.

Gentle Jesus, pure and holy,
 Still the angels lead to thee;
And the children follow gladly
 To the child of Galilee.
Like the wise men, gifts we bring thee,
 Like the shepherds, we adore,
Like the angels, songs we sing thee,
 Love and praise forever more.

C. W. W.

Christmas. CHICAGO, 1870.



CHRISTMAS SNOWS AT THE GOLDEN GATE

CHRISTMAS never brings San Francisco children any snow. Santa Claus has to leave his sleigh and reindeer behind him in the muddy roads, and take to his good stout legs in order to bring the little San Franciscans their toys and sweetmeats. Jack Frost makes few calls and very short stops, so that the boys and girls who live in the sunshine that rests upon the Golden Gate find it hard to understand the Eastern tradition of Christmas cold and Christmas snows. The fields and forests in their pure white robes, the cold star-lit heavens at night, the noon-day sun sparkling in a million tiny ice-crystals, the merry skaters on the frozen lake or river, the sleds hurtling down the long coast, the jingling sleigh-bells, the images and

forts and caves our young builders construct out of the thawing snow, — all these the San Francisco boy has never known.

It occasionally happens that a sudden snowfall on the mountains on the opposite side of the bay robes Monte Diablo and her sister ranges in a shimmering white veil, and the whole population of the city looks eagerly across the water at the novel and beautiful spectacle. And, once, years ago, a genuine snow-storm swept over San Francisco and made its people, young and old, wild with excitement and glee. It was comical to see staid old merchants and other grown-ups rush out, grasp handfuls of the frosty mixture and pelt each other with it, frolicking like a lot of New England schoolboys, while the San Francisco children, at first astonished and half-afraid at the unfamiliar sight, soon caught the contagion of the hour, and entered with enthusiasm into what would probably be their only opportunity to know the joys of a real winter. With shouts and laughter the boys tumbled about in the snow, improvised sleds, piled up mimic forts, pelted each other and the passers-by; in short, behaved much like the children of more frigid latitudes. The girls were quite as excited as

the boys, romping and shouting in their glee, and snow-balling each other and their friends. The few Chinamen who ventured out had a hard time of it. They were pelted and rolled in the snow-drifts until they looked more like Eskimos than Celestials.

But this was one experience in a life-time for a San Francisco child. In all its recorded history since the white man became a dweller by the Golden Gate this was the only occasion when a real snow-storm visited it, while it has never known a snowy Christmas. In December as in mid-summer the rose-bushes are covered with blossoms white and red, the climbing fuchsias swing their purple bells, smilax, heliotrope, geranium and calla lilies bloom in the garden. The poet E. R. Sill, looking at the floral loveliness of such a winter from his Berkeley windows fronting the Golden Gate, sings his wonder:

"Can this be Christmas? — Sweet as May,
With drowsy sun and dreamy air,
And new grass pointing out the way
For flowers to follow everywhere.

O wondrous gift, in goodness given,
Each hour anew our eyes to greet,
An earth so fair — so close to Heaven,
'Twas trodden by the Master's feet."

Once upon a time, a number of us, teachers in the Pilgrim Sunday-school of San Francisco, sat in conference and planned our coming Christmas festival. We had some four hundred children to provide for; as bright and happy a lot as ever were gathered within a Sunday-school.

Every year, a great Christmas festival was held in a public hall, to which the children and their friends were invited, and the proceeds of which paid nearly the entire expenses of the school for the ensuing year. We had about completed our arrangements. The tree, the gifts, the music, the tableaux, the addresses, the supper, all had been assigned to efficient committees. Only one feature remained for discussion, — the proper entrance and introduction of Santa Claus, who had never yet failed to appear at our feast. We had well-nigh exhausted, in previous years, the various possible methods of introducing the good old saint. One year, we had him pop up suddenly through a trap door on the stage; once, he came tumbling down a great chimney-piece; and, once again, he arrived just in the nick of time, and stood waving us a welcome high above our heads, from whence he climbed down

nimbly on a rope, hand under hand, to the screaming delight of the children, but to the serious derangement of his pack and his stomach. But, now, we were at an end with our devices.

"I have it!" said Fred Gummer. "Let's stick to the old tradition, and have him dragged into the hall in a sleigh drawn by deer."

"But you forget," rejoined our wise-headed and devoted superintendent, Horace Davis, smiling behind his glasses, — "you forget that Santa always leaves his turn-out behind him, and trudges to San Francisco on foot."

"Very true," answered Fred; "but I know a mountaineer who has just brought to town two live deer. They are quite tame, and we can obtain their use for the evening. A neat sleigh, with little rollers hidden under the runners, can be built, and fitted up with buffalo robes, bells, etc.; thus equipped, Kriss Kringle can for once enter the hall in a state becoming his dignity."

All declared this to be a capital suggestion, and it was at once adopted.

"Now, if we could only arrange as easily for a snow-storm that evening," said Elizabeth Easton, one of our most loyal teachers, "the thing would be complete."

"And why not?" cried Charlie W———.

"Leave that to me. I have a notion on the subject, and can promise you a genuine snowfall."

And to this also all agreed.

The next day, two or three of us, who had been let into the secret, went to a book-binder, and arranged for a large supply of the long and narrow clippings of paper which are shaved off in the process of making up a book. Then, at a Chinese employment office, we hired two stout Chinamen, who were set to work in an upper loft of a friend's store. Each Chinaman was furnished with a large pair of shears, glittering and sharp. As neither of them could understand a word of our language, with many gestures and grimaces they were instructed to sit by a huge heap of the paper clippings, and cut them into little pieces, or flakes, letting these fall into a packing-box before them. Poor Hop Lee and Wo Fun stolidly set to work. They patiently snipped away all that day and the next, until their hands were too weary to hold the shears. It was not an inspiring task, but they performed it with religious exaltation and awe. For it is their custom to prepare such small bits of paper inscribed with sacred Chinese characters by their priests, and to throw

them by handfuls into the air or burn them, in order to ward off the evil spirits which they believe are ever hovering about to do them harm. So our poor Coolies felt they were assisting at a religious ceremony; and who, re-recalling what our Christmas celebration is, shall say that they were not?

The afternoon of Christmas day came at last; and Platt's Hall was filled with a large and noisy company of little ones, romping, dancing, shouting, and trooping down to the cavernous-looking supper room below. On the stage, behind a huge screen, stood the Christmas tree, a tremendous specimen of its kind. As the day wore on the older folk arrived, and presently the exercises began. The children lustily sang their Christmas carols, the young men and women surpassed themselves in tableaux and shadow pantomimes, and between the acts the children danced to merry music. In the meantime, a half dozen of us, each with a bag full of paper snow-flakes on his shoulders, found our way up over the ceiling of the hall, and crept, candle in hand, across the slender rafters. The space was so low we could not stand upright. A single misstep, and our foot would go crashing through the lath and mortar ceiling,

and hang like a signal of distress over the heads of the audience below. "How hot it is up here!" grumbled Charlie Murdock. "My snow will melt before I get to my position." "Be careful that you don't set fire to your snow with that candle," cried another. So, with laughter and retort, we each crawled to one of the great ventilators through which the heated air escaped from the hall below; and, dumping our pile of flakes conveniently near it, we stretched out on the rafters, peered down at the spectacle beneath us, and awaited the signal at which we were to begin snowing.

It was a pretty sight we gazed down upon, — the great hall glittering with lights and filled with a brilliant and ever-shifting company, the children circling in the merry dance or standing in eager groups awaiting the arrival of Santa Claus. Surrounded by a company of friends and parishioners, stood the minister of the church, stalwart Horatio Stebbins, then not long arrived in California, but already a conspicuous figure.

On the fringe of the crowd, a slender, dark-haired man with laughing eyes stood nervously twitching his glossy mustache, or bent to listen to his children's prattle. Who among all that

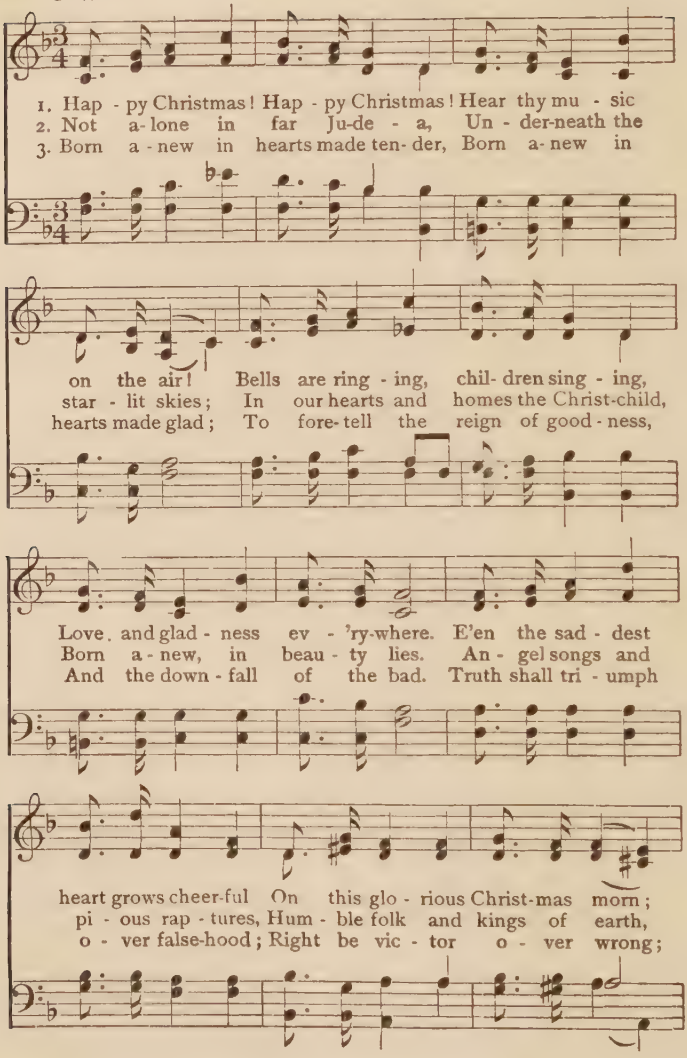
great company would have dreamed that this shy and as yet little known man, Frank Bret Harte, was in coming years to confer such lustre on his adopted State, immortalizing in tale and poem the beauty and romance of California, even as Starr King embodied for us in his brilliant oratory and martyr life the patriotism and loyalty of that land of sunshine and gold. And there, too, the central figure who brought order and purpose into all the confusion and noise, was our genial superintendent, even more at home among the children than on the floor of Congress where, in after years, he made for himself an honorable record.

All this and more we gazed down upon from our high perch. But, now, the music came to a sudden stop. The children eagerly crowded up to the front of the stage, the screen was drawn aside, and there stood the giant Christmas tree, glittering with lights, strung with goodies, shining with its mimic silver and gold, and loaded with gifts for all. The general "Ah!" that greeted its glories soon swelled to shrill cries of delight as with cheery shout and jingling bells old Santa Claus came driving into the hall in his well-stocked sleigh, drawn by two pretty, bounding deer. The children gath-

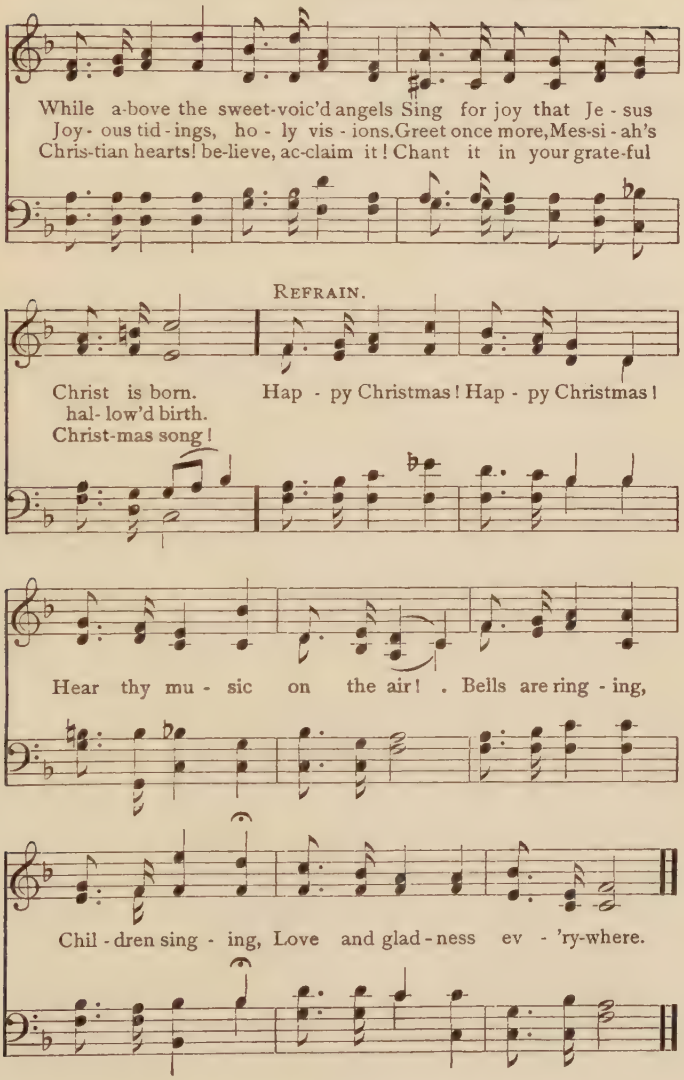
ered around their old friend as he nimbly descended and gave them a hearty greeting. But wonders were never to cease that happy night. As the orchestra struck up the Sleigh-bell Polka, the very heavens above seemed to open, and for once at least in the annals of a San Francisco Christmas *it snowed.* Oh, how it did snow! At first, a few flakes fluttered down furtively, then more and faster, and faster and more furiously still, till the whole room seemed full of the tiny messengers of purity. They settled down on the tree with its glittering lights, on the beard of the good old saint, on the merry children who jumped up to catch them as they fell and sought to press them together into snowballs, while the old folk declared: "Yes, this reminds us of the scenes of our youth. This is something like what Christmas used to be." Meanwhile, we, having finished our task, brushed the dust and cobwebs from each other and descended, well pleased at having increased the festival joy of the children, and given San Francisco her first Christmas snow-storm.

CAROL. HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

C. W. W. C. W. W.



CAROL. HAPPY CHRISTMAS. Continued.





CHRISTMAS JOYS IN FIRE-SWEPT CHICAGO

THE evening worship at the West Side Church had drawn to a close on that fateful day in the history of Chicago, Oct. 8, 1871. The preacher had spoken to his audience of the instability and inadequacy of earthly possessions as sources of enduring happiness, and counselled them to seek it rather in cheerful work, unselfish love, and trust in the divine ordering of their lives. Little did he or his hearers dream how close at hand was the experience which was to justify his teaching. As minister and people left the church the fire-bells sounded an alarm, the heavens were red with flame and the streets filled with a wild rush of people. One of the most disastrous conflagrations of modern times had begun its devastating

work. For months past the Northwest had experienced an excessively dry season, with only a quarter of its usual rainfall. The great and sprawling city, built chiefly of wood, and the enormous lumber piles in the western addition were like tinder which a spark might ignite. The overturning of a lamp by the kick of a wilful cow in Widow O'Leary's shed — so runs the local tradition — sufficed to bring on the terrible calamity. All night the fire raged and nearly all next day, crossing the river, leaping with tongues of flame over whole blocks of buildings, and with incredible rapidity converting nearly all the public edifices, railway stations, churches, hotels, banks and warehouses of the city, together with their contents, into dust and ashes. Thousands of homes, of the rich as well as the poor, were burned to the ground. Seventeen thousand buildings in all, covering an area four miles long by one and a half wide, and two hundred millions of property were destroyed. A hundred thousand people, many of whom lost all their earthly possessions, were driven into the streets, while over two hundred lost their lives. By blowing up with gunpowder rows of wooden houses, the fire was finally stayed on the south side of the city, and exhausted itself on the

north by burning up all there was to feed it. The west side was saved by the direction of the wind. Eastward, Lake Michigan extended, and standing for hours in its waters, thousands found protection from the intense heat and flying sparks and cinders. It was an awful experience for those who passed through it, and impressively taught the folly of setting one's heart on earthly treasures that perish.

The young minister — he was in his twenty-seventh year and serving his first parish — turned anxiously homeward that eventful night, whose calamitous character he did not as yet realize. He was excessively tired. It had been his third preaching service that Sunday. In the morning he had conducted the worship for his own congregation, a missionary undertaking on the south side of the city. In the afternoon he had preached in the suburb of Hyde Park to a newly gathered flock. This involved buggy-rides of ten miles across the prairie. And now in the evening, in the absence of its pastor, he had ministered to the society on the west side of the city. As he jolted homewards wearily in the crowded horse-car, the incessant clanging of the fire-bells, the clatter of hurrying fire-engines and the rush of people speeding to the

scene of the conflagration gave increasing evidence of the gravity of the impending disaster. Throwing himself, on his arrival at home, exhausted on his bed, he found sleep impossible. The glare of the fire, the shouting and running without, anxiety for his brother, a young engineer, who had gone into the heart of the city to help save the records and papers of the railroad of which he was an employee, soon drove the minister out into the streets, and made him an awe-struck witness, and, so far as he could be, a fighter of the fire. It was a fearful, never-to-be-forgotten spectacle to see high structures, loaded to the roof with valuable merchandise, come crashing down to the trembling ground; to behold soaring church-spires wreathed in flame, totter and fall in crumbling ruin; whole rows of handsome residences converted in an instant into a seething furnace; to breathe the hot air filled with flying cinders and choking dust, and to note, amid the din of falling buildings, the howling hurricane of the wind and the crackle and roar of the flames, the impressive silence of the people, fleeing in multitudes from the fury of the elements, or struggling in groups to arrest the progress of the fire.

By command of the Mayor, an efficient

leader, whole rows of dwellings were blown up and the progress of the flame on the south stayed. The minister's home and the homes of his parishioners were saved. But the business and professional activities of the latter were involved in the common ruin. His missing brother returned safely, though badly burned on face and hands. He had succeeded, almost single-handed, in saving the valuable papers in the office of the company, loading them into a train of freight cars to be hauled out of the fire-zone. But when he came out of the burning building with the last armful of valuables the train had sped on without him, and he had to seek the waters of the lake for safety. Here, alternately chilled and burned, he fought off the flames for hours until at length, with dawning day, he contrived, with others, to reach and crawl along the narrow stone and timber breakwater which stretched for miles along the Lake Front, and which now furnished their way of escape.

The next days and weeks brought many opportunities for service to the minister. After assuring himself as well as he could in the general confusion which prevailed that the members of his own society were safe and did

not require his ministrations, his thoughts went out to others dear to him, especially to his fatherly friend and elder brother in the faith, Rev. Robert Collyer, the poet-preacher of Unity Church, on the north side. His splendid new church, only recently erected, lay in ruins, his home and the homes of his parishioners were destroyed, and he himself and his family were fugitives. But where they had found shelter no one was able to tell.

In response to the piteous appeal of a hundred thousand unsheltered, hungering people, there now arose throughout the nation and the world a movement of human sympathy and charitable relief such as never before had been known in the annals of mankind, making the page of history to shine with its record of goodwill and generosity. Millions of hearts were enlisted, millions of dollars raised, millions of gifts forwarded to feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, clothe the naked, and rebuild the stricken city. It is said that when subjected to intense heat the design and lettering of a worn and defaced coin will appear again on its surface. So in the furnace heats of that great affliction the pure gold of human nature, the divine image and superscription stamped

upon it, oft hidden from sight by man's preoccupation with external and selfish concerns, came into beautiful relief, disclosing the intrinsic nobility of the human heart. And this nobility was displayed equally by those who gave and those who administered these gifts of love.

The first consignment of food for the hungering multitude came from Detroit and intervening Michigan communities. At early dawn on Tuesday morning a party of prominent Chicagoans, Marshall Field, George M. Pullman, Wirt Dexter, Edson Keith, Mayor Mason, Murry Nelson, William H. Doggett, C. H. S. Mixer, Byron P. Moulton — to mention only those whom the writer recalls — together with two or three clergymen, Revs. Robert Laird Collier, William H. Ryder, and the one who tells this story, assembled at a local freight station on 16th Street to unload a train of freight cars, which had just rolled in from Michigan, filled with provisions for the sufferers. The city having been declared under martial law, Mayor Mason had commandeered a number of covered wagons which were backed up against the high platform. Barrels of crackers, cheeses, cooked hams, loaves of bread fresh from

the farmers' ovens, cans of milk, and many other supplies were unloaded by this group of serious and hard-working men who, neglecting their own pressing affairs, toiled in the chill air that gray morning for their impoverished and suffering brothers. When the first wagon had been sufficiently filled with supplies, Dr. Laird Collier, pastor of the First Unitarian Church, took a seat beside its driver, declaring that he wanted the honor of dispensing the first load of provisions to the hungry people. Desiring to share in that privilege, the present writer leaped in behind, found a seat on a cheese-box, and they drove away on their errand of mercy. It was a long, hard journey over the rough streets, filled with debris, to the West Side, and thence northward, until they reached the sole remaining bridge that gave access to the stricken north division of the city. At length the wagon drove up to its destination, Dearborn Park, around which were grouped the ruins of Unity Church, the New England Church, and the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Name, and the Ogden home, the single surviving house which, though of wood, by a combination of circumstances had escaped the flames. Here was encountered a swarming multitude of unhoused

and hungry people, who had returned from their flight to seek food and shelter, and in many cases also for members of their family from whom they had been separated in that wild night of disaster. To justly distribute the supplies to the horde of eager applicants that gathered round them was no easy matter. They were asked in their own interest to assist the committee. Out of the midst of the crowd two men came forward, the one a well-known priest of the adjacent Catholic Church, the other the Rabbi of a Jewish congregation. With their help the task of distribution was made easier. It was delightful to see how in this hour of supreme need all sectarian differences were forgotten. The Priest held a ham from which the Rabbi cut slices for the hungry poor, quite unmindful of the Old Testament injunction against the forbidden swine's-flesh, while the Protestant ministers, dispensing the bread consecrated by human love to their needy brethren, felt that it was a sacramental act whose validity no one could impeach. Their common calamity and sorrow made them all one in faith, hope, and the charity that is greatest of all. It was a beautiful prophecy of the better time coming when religious men and

women will rise above the differing intellectual opinions and ritual observances which now divide, and often embitter them, into the higher recognition of the common human interests of mankind; when all men shall be united into one great family, children of the All-Father.

Inquiries were diligently made concerning the whereabouts of Robert Collyer, and it was learned that after battling hard, but in vain, to save his church, he had fled with his family to the house of friends, somewhere in the suburbs north of Chicago.

The next day, after a conference with the unselfish and good mother who was his housekeeper, companion and best friend, the young minister devised a plan to bring his friend, Robert Collyer, together with his family, to his own comfortable and commodious dwelling for such a stay as might seem best to them. How to reach and transport them and their necessary belongings was the next question. All interior lines of communication had been destroyed. Horses and teams were unobtainable except at fabulous prices. But good will found a way. Far on the prairie a neighbor had turned out an aged horse to rest and die. Another neighbor had a creaking, dilapidated buggy and a

set of harness that might be patched up with rope ends for temporary service. The minister walked out to the pasture early in the morning, and contrived to approach the venerable steed, slip a halter over his neck and bring him triumphantly home. He was harnessed into the ramshackle old buggy, whose springs sagged and bumped portentously, and the journey was begun. On the way the minister stopped at the First Church to inform its pastor, Rev. R. Laird Collier, of his purpose, and ask if any more recent news had reached him concerning their fellow clergyman. The First Church presented that morning a novel and gratifying spectacle. Like other remaining public buildings it was in use as a refuge for the homeless people. Its pews were converted into beds. Here hundreds found protection from the cold night air. In the basement food was provided for them. Dr. Collier, with a committee of citizens, was already engaged in the work of relieving the distressed in which he rendered admirable service during the hard winter that followed. Impulsive as he was he at once volunteered to go with his young brother on the search for Robert Collyer. It was a slow and wearisome journey. The decrepit and stiff-

legged old horse, the crowded thoroughfares, the repeated and often fruitless inquiries, made it late in the day when at last the modest cottage was reached where their friends had found shelter. As they entered, Robert Collyer, with face and eyes inflamed from his brave fight with the fire, came forward in amazement and joy to meet them. Falling upon their necks, he sobbed: "God bless you, brethren, for coming! My beautiful church, the delight of my eyes, is gone. My dear people are scattered, I know not where!" They strove to comfort and reassure him. Seeing in a corner a small pile of Mr. Collyer's manuscript sermons which a young parishioner had rescued from his study at the last moment, the younger minister said sorrowfully: "To think of all your fine sermons that have gone up in flame!" "Never mind about them, laddie," was the cheery reply. "I've got the place left where they came from, and with God's help there'll be many more!" And there were.

After a conference together, it was arranged that for the time being Collyer and his wife and the children should make the house of his young colleague their home. Mrs. Collyer, and a younger daughter, with a trunk full of

necessaries, so weighed down the conveyance that brother Laird had to walk home. The rest of the Collyer family followed the next day. The poor exhausted nag contrived to crawl late that evening to the door of the young minister's house; the last service he rendered on earth, and a noble one.

There was great jubilation next day when the re-united family met once more in their new ark of safety. Robert Collyer's heart was cheered by letters and telegrams from friends and reassuring visits from his parishioners. One generous layman in Boston, Hon. William Gray, assumed his entire salary for the coming year, that he might be free to devote all his powers to his church and city.

The next Sunday morning the scattered members of Unity Church met in the ruins of their temple for reunion and worship. Standing within its roofless nave and blackened walls, their pastor voiced their sorrow, and cheered their hearts by foretelling the speedy restoration of their church home. His young brother met his own congregation, and preached to them on the text, "The Voice of the Eternal Crieth unto the City," — enforcing the lessons of the fire. For the remainder of that bleak

winter the two ministers and their congregations, uniting with their Universalist friends, held joint services in Murray Chapel, the pretty edifice of the latter.

More and more the young minister's home, happily spared for such service, became a centre of hospitalities and relief operations. Hither came many guests, but none more welcome than Edward Everett Hale, inspirer and helper of men. It was he who, when the citizens of Boston met in historic Faneuil Hall to consider the sending of relief to stricken Chicago, leaped on the platform, and in an address of wonderful power and pathos moved all hearts and assured a generous response to the appeal. Ten days after the great fire, a group of earnest men, representative citizens of Chicago, assembled in the minister's study to meet a committee sent out by the Boston Young Men's Christian Union to ascertain what service the latter might render the stricken city. The committee was headed by the public-spirited and energetic president of the Union, William H. Baldwin, whom Phillips Brooks once called "Boston's most useful citizen." After looking over the field the committee came to the conclusion that the speedy rebuilding of Chicago in even greater

splendor was assured, and that the physical wants of the burnt-out families would be amply met by the world's bounty. It was the educational, social, and religious needs of the young community which most called for attention and help. The committee therefore advised that, as one step in this direction, a Young Men's Christian Union be organized in Chicago, modelled after the Boston Union, to care for the thousands of young men, clerks, book-keepers, students, mechanics and apprentices, whom the fire had deprived of their home associations and social and educational resources. Such a place of evening resort, recreation, and self-improvement was urgently needed. Mr. Baldwin promised that the Boston Society would aid in fostering such an enterprise in Chicago, and would make it the agency for distributing the large benevolences which they had in mind for Chicago during the coming winter. The present meeting had been called to consider and act upon this suggestion.

It was an interesting and striking occasion. The room in which they met was dimly lighted with tallow candles set in high-necked bottles, the City gas supply not yet having been restored. The only refreshment was Lake Michi-

gan water, brought from the lake-side that afternoon in a wash-boiler by the minister and his brother, the City Water Works being still out of commission. But the spirit of the meeting was effervescent, and the discussion by Revs. Robert Collyer and R. Laird Collier, and David Gage, Eli Bates, B. P. Moulton, and others of Chicago, was sufficiently illuminating. It was decided unanimously to inaugurate such a movement. The young minister, who had been an active member of the Boston Union in his earlier days, was chosen as its Secretary, and, as far as his church duties would permit, its organizer. His house was made the temporary headquarters of the movement. Dr. E. E. Hale's famous dictum, which, he once told the writer, was simply Paul's word "Faith, hope and charity" transposed into the modern vernacular, was adopted as the motto of the Chicago Union:

> "Look up, and not down,
> Look out, and not in,
> Look forward, and not back,
> And lend a hand."

Thus humbly began an unsectarian philanthropy which for forty years and more occupied an honorable place in the educational and re-

ligious life of the great western metropolis. In its study classes and lectures, its gymnasium and clubs, tens of thousands of young people — for its scope was soon enlarged by admitting young women also to its membership — have found educational and social opportunities. Under the name which, with no advantage to its work, it later assumed, *The Chicago Atheneum*, it still carries on the tradition of its earlier years.

And now, in fulfilment of its promise, many boxes, barrels and bales containing clothing, bedding and hospital supplies, began to arrive from the Boston Young Men's Christian Union. Dumped in solid rows around the minister's house, they soon compelled him to secure more suitable quarters for their storage and distribution. Committees of benevolently disposed men and women were organized to superintend the latter, and toiled unselfishly and hard all winter. In all over one thousand boxes and bales, containing over 150,000 counted articles forwarded by the Boston Union, were efficiently handled by its sister society in Chicago, and relieved the immediate necessities of more than 10,000 needy persons. It would be pleasant to narrate some of the interesting and moving incidents of this benevolent activity, which

relieved with touches of human kindness the bitter cold and misery of that bleak winter, the appalling spectacle of the ruined and desolate city, dimly lighted and deserted at night, and chaotic with noise and confusion by day, as slowly but surely Chicago arose in new solidity and beauty.

But we must confine ourselves to the most delightful episode of it all. In November there came to the minister's house a party consisting of Revs. S. H. Winkley and Henry W. Foote, and Messrs. William H. Baldwin and H. H. Sprague of Boston. Before they departed they asked their host to name some one thing that they might recommend on their return to the children of their Sunday schools as their special work for the destitute children of Chicago. This gave the minister the opportunity he had been longing for to assure a happy Christmas to the desolated homes of the poor of the city. He asked them to send the Chicago Christian Union gifts suitable for a Christmas distribution to the destitute children of the city, without regard to creed, sect or nationality.

Immediately on their return the Boston committee set about the matter. Appeals were made to New England pastors and parishes,

circulars were sent out, the newspapers enlisted — Gail Hamilton, editor of *Our Young Folks*, making an especially effective plea — the children were set at work, and soon the result became apparent in a steady stream of gifts that filled to overflowing the parlors of the Boston Young Men's Christian Union, which had offered to pack and forward the contributions. The appeal antedated the Christmas festival by so few weeks that there was hardly time for it to be generally known and acted upon. Yet the response was most gratifying, far exceeding anticipations. Over sixty cases in all were sent to the Chicago Union, often accompanied by letters whose graciousness made the gifts still more acceptable. Some seventy Sunday schools, nearly all of Unitarian Church connection, and many individual givers, contributed to make this result possible.

In the meantime the Chicago Society prepared for the work of distributing the gifts. Day after day the Christmas boxes arrived, to be eagerly opened and delightedly examined by the committee of ladies, belonging to different denominations, including the Roman Catholic and Jewish, who were charged with their distribution. The writer recalls Madam Jane S.

Wendte, Mesdames David A. Gage, George M. Pullman, Henry Booth, Oscar Safford and C. A. Staples, and the Misses Roberts, Lunt, Agnew, Annie Laurie, and last, but not least, Miss Jessie Bross, afterwards Mrs. Henry D. Lloyd. The contents of the boxes were sorted and piled up around the walls and stacked in the center of the Union parlors until the latter looked like a big toy shop. Every token of affectionate remembrance suitable for Christmas was represented. Books for juveniles and older people, dolls in myriads, fancy boxes, games in profusion, savings banks, toys in endless variety, Noah's arks, baby houses, toy dishes, drums, trumpets, pocket-books, ornaments, clothing — it is impossible to tell here all the potential joy for childhood that was contained in the 10,000 or more articles which had been sent by the kind-hearted boys and girls of New England to their little brothers and sisters in fire-stricken Chicago.

Invitations were issued to the officers of Sunday schools which had been victims of the fire to hand in lists of their children, together with their ages, in order that suitable presents might be selected for them, and they were asked to call and obtain their allotment for distribution at their own school festivals. They were

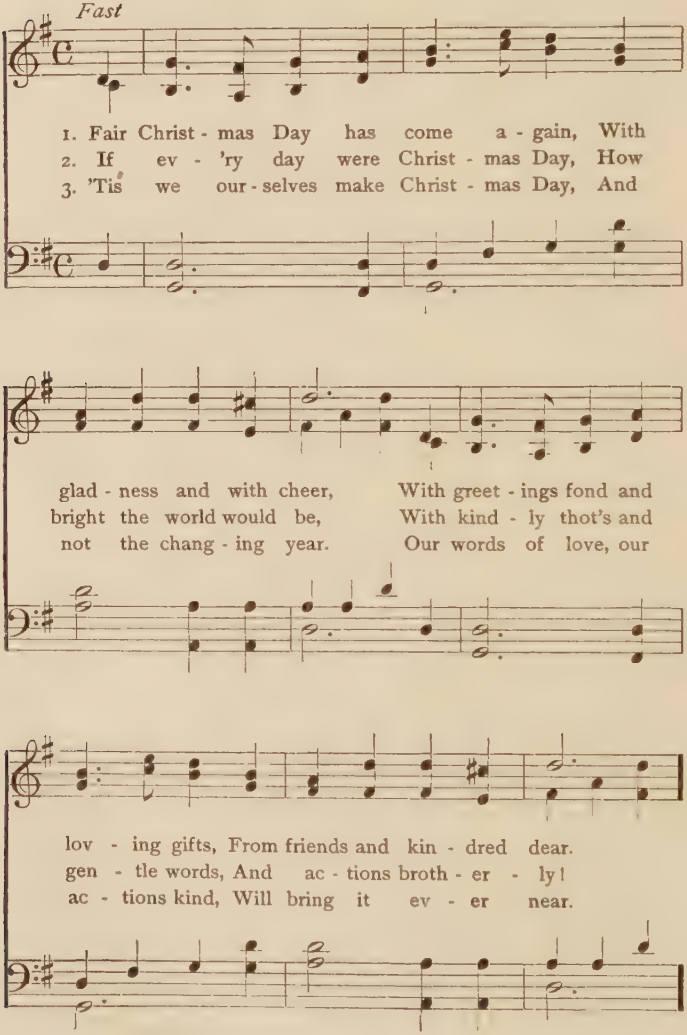
not slow in responding, and many a grateful word was spoken by pastors and superintendents in recognition of the Christ-like spirit which had prompted all this holiday giving. Presbyterian and Methodist, Unitarian and Universalist, Congregational and Baptist, Lutheran and Episcopal, Colored, Swedish and German schools, orphan asylums, and Catholic and Jewish families shared in this Christmas beneficence, which gave to eight thousand children in fire-swept Chicago a Happy Christmas, and transformed what would have been to many a dreary anniversary into a festival of light and joy.

But why must we wait for such great calamities to teach us the blessedness of giving? Why should not every day be Christmas day in our homes and hearts? That is the theme of the little carol which is printed beneath this account of happy days and doings in the midst of devastation and misery nearly fifty years ago. Let us take its lesson to heart, and thus display the spirit of him whose birthday we celebrate at Christmas, and who told us: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

CAROL. CHRISTMAS EVERY DAY

C. W. W. C. K. v. D. C.

Fast




Then let us sing with hearts of glee, Our
Then care and strife would far de - part, And
The sea - sons come, the sea - sons go, If
praise and thanks right mer - ri - ly, For
joy would reign in ev - 'ry heart, With
Chris - tian love a - bide be - low, Then
a little slower
Christ-mas Day is here, Fair Christ-mas Day is here.
Christ-mas ev - er here, Fair Christ-mas ev - er here.
Christ-mas Day is here, Fair Christ-mas Day is here.



CHRISTMAS EVE IN PURITAN BOSTON

IT was Christmas Eve in Boston seventy years ago. A violent snowstorm filled the streets and dooryards with its swirling and fleecy masses, and laid a pure white mantle upon the historic Common and the graves of the fathers in the Old Granary and King's Chapel Churchyards. Its wintry blasts and driving snowflakes well kept up the traditions of the central festival of the Christian church and home. But it was not observed in any festival fashion by the worthy burghers of Boston, still swayed in that day by the Puritan prejudice which looked on mirth and cheer as unseemly, if not unhallowed, and on Christmas as a forbidden holiday of popish institution. Hence their houses remained dark and the streets almost deserted on this Holy Night

which marked the advent of the Christ. Only here and there an illuminated window told the passer-by of some happy family group, presumably of foreign birth and custom, gathered gleefully around their gaily decorated Christmas tree, with its lights and spangles, its goodies and gifts, keeping together with joy and tenderness the sacred festival of their race and their religion. These and the public places of amusement were almost the only exceptions to the general gloom which reigned over the ancient city of Boston on that wintry Christmas Night, seventy years ago.

In reaction, perhaps, from the austere, joyless manner in which Christmas was observed in the churches, the theatres that evening were filled to overflowing with amusement and pleasure seekers. The Howard Atheneum especially, then the favorite play-house of Bostonians, was crowded to the doors with a fashionably attired and enthusiastic audience attracted by the unique and delightful performances of a company of juvenile dancers and players from over the sea, the Viennese Children. The talent and charm of these young artists had taken the city by storm, and for several months they were the rage of fashionable society.

The high spirits of the audience that Christmas evening seemed to have communicated itself to the performers, who, it was agreed, had never appeared to better advantage or called forth such rapturous applause. Of these the premières, two sisters, both equally beautiful and gifted, especially distinguished themselves. The eldest was a raven-haired brunette with classic features lit by wondrously luminous eyes. The younger sister was a golden-haired and piquant blonde, with deep blue eyes and dazzling complexion. Their modest bearing and the grace and charm of their performance elicited general admiration and made them the idols of the hour. In the wings, watching their performance, stood their proud and devoted mother, solicitous for their health and welfare, ready during every interval to throw over their fair shoulders the protecting wraps that would shield them from the wintry draughts which, penetrating the skylights above, swept across the stage.

The performance at last came to an end. The music ceased, the applause died away, the audience dispersed to face the storm and seek their homes. In the dressing rooms below the troupe of excited, tired children disrobed and slipped into their every-day garments to return

to the hotels and lodging houses in which they were quartered. But unbeknown to them their manager, Herr G., mindful, like a true German, of the tender and sacred memories which Christmas Eve held for these lonely and wandering children, so far away from their homes and families, had prepared for them a happy surprise. Working together with the adult members and employees of the troupe, and with the cheerfully given help of certain German residents of Boston, a huge evergreen tree had been brought in from what were then the wilds of West Roxbury. It had been adorned with lights and glittering baubles, golden and silver nuts and apples hung from its boughs, with candies and gifts for all the young actors. As soon as the curtain fell and the children had left the stage the tree was brought in and set up, the candles lighted, the gifts arranged below it, and the children summoned. They came one by one, wonderingly and somewhat unwilling. But when they saw the shining tree, and realized what it all meant, their joy was unbounded. "*Ein Weihnachtsbaum!* A Christmas tree! And for us! O, how lovely! Just as we knew it in Deutschland!" The delighted children forgot that they were tired, forgot the

chilling winds without, forgot that they were so far away from home and kindred. They danced and shouted, they embraced each other and their kind-hearted manager. What had gone before that evening was art and make-believe, but this was nature and reality. And now the gifts were distributed, creating new excitement and glee. Then the orchestral leader lined up the little party, and the children of the stage sang with heart and voice, and a tenderness that brought tears to the eyes of the older men and women present, the lovely German Carol, now known to all the world:

"Silent night! peaceful night!
All things sleep, shepherds keep
Watch on Bethlehem's silent hill;
And unseen, while all is still,
Angels watch above, angels watch above.

Light around! joyous sound!
Angels voices wake the air;
Glory be to God in heaven,
Peace on earth to you is given;
Lo! the Christ is born! Lo! the Christ
is born!"

This and other Christmas hymns the happy children sang, but no voices among them thrilled with deeper feeling than those of the two fair sisters, as with their arms thrown lovingly

around their mother, they kept together the sacred festival that has brought such unspeakable joy to Christian hearts and homes. Once more the spirit of Christmas had conquered; the spirit of love and peace, of joy and thankfulness had triumphed over the austere piety, the gloomy thoughts, the cheerless homes, the narrow prejudices of Puritan Boston, seventy years ago.

Their season ended, the Viennese Children departed for other American cities on their artistic errand, everywhere repeating their Boston successes, and finally returned to Germany. It is not our purpose to follow their fortunes, with the single exception of the eldest of the sisters, the two premières of the troupe. Her personal history was, as we shall see, again to be associated with Boston and its people. The two sisters grew to womanly beauty and became noted and greatly admired artists of the Fatherland. The younger, who married early and retired to a happy home-life, need not further concern us. The elder sister by her dramatic gifts and womanly charm fascinated the only son of one of the leading families of a great mercantile city of Germany. His

suit was successful and he announced to his family and friends his intention to marry the young and talented artist. His parents, who had formed other plans for their son, strongly objected to a match which wounded their aristocratic pride and frustrated their social ambitions. In vain he pleaded the personal attractions and immaculate character of the woman who had enamored him and who returned his affection so warmly. The angry father warned the infatuated youth that if he persisted in his purpose he would be disowned and his allowance cut off altogether. As he had been brought up to no particular vocation save that of a young gentleman of leisure and good expectations by what means would he support himself and the woman of his choice? The son, who had inherited a goodly share of his father's pride and obstinacy, refused to yield to either threat or persuasion. His bride was of the same way of thinking, and with an artist's sense of independence had no fears for their future. They accordingly were married and began life anew together. The obdurate father would not relent and soon they began to feel the pinch of want. Their life drama was soon to assume tragic features.

The young fellow was sincerely desirous of obtaining a bread-winning employment which would enable him to support his wife and himself, and she was ready to make any sacrifice for his sake. But he found every avenue closed to him in his native city, perhaps with his angry father's connivance. A few jewels and other personal belongings were disposed of, but afforded only temporary relief. The young husband could not bring himself to allow his wife to resume her artistic career and to live on her earnings. Attempts to obtain work in other communities failed. Everywhere the German strictness demanded evidence of his competency as well as good intention. Only one resource seemed left, to depart from home and kindred and seek a new career in America, the land of business and artistic possibilities. And so it happened that the penniless but deserving young couple joined the great stream of emigrants to the New World, and the heroine of our story presently found herself once more, but in very different circumstances, in the city of Boston, the scene of her former and juvenile triumphs.

They encountered here the same vicissitudes of fortune to which the vast majority of immi-

grants were subjected. Strangers in a strange land, speaking the language of the country but imperfectly, and unfamiliar with its business and social customs, they soon found their condition even worse than it had been in the Fatherland. In vain the husband sought an occupation, however modest, by which he might meet their most necessary requirements. Even manual labor seemed denied him. Their resources daily diminished, until at length they felt the pangs of hunger and knew not where to lay their heads. Swallowing his pride the young husband called on the business representative of his father in Boston, and disclosed to him their critical situation. But the agent had received his instructions and informed him, perhaps with unnecessary brutality, that only on condition of his abandoning his wife and returning to his family in Germany would aid be extended him. The indignant husband refused to accept such ignominious terms or betray the woman to whom his faith had been pledged. The ensuing night, in cold November weather, was spent by the unfortunate young couple under the open sky on one of the benches on Boston Common. Her fair and drooping head reclined against his loyal shoulder as he tried

to shield her from the frosty night and comfort her. Close by was the great hotel in which, on her previous visit, she had been entertained as an honored and pampered guest. The gray morning dawned upon a worn out and discouraged young couple, so attractive even in their misery that an early passer-by stopped to hold some conversation with them, was touched by their desolate condition, and extended the friendly aid of which they were so sorely in need. He did more, he interested himself actively in their behalf. Through his kind intercession several prominent Germans of Boston were made acquainted with the case of their deserving fellow-countrymen. Among these was a certain towering and warm-hearted musical director Z———, and his good wife. Work was found for the husband, friendly care for the young wife, who shortly after became a mother.

The struggle of life had been made easier for the young couple, but was still hard. As the Christmas season approached, with its memories of happy hours and dear friends across the ocean, their hearts were shadowed with longings and regrets. In a half-humorous, half-desperate mood the husband laid hands on

a pair of topboots which a year before had been among his Christmas gifts from his father, but which had become so dilapidated by his ceaseless quest for work that they were no unfit symbol of his own depressed fortunes. He made a parcel of them, accompanied with a Christmas greeting and a picture of their child, and committed it to the foreign mails. It was consigned to a friend in his native city with the request that it should be delivered on Christmas Night to his parents.

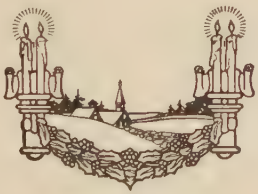
In the meantime the latter had equally suffered from the absence and alienation of their only child. During the year that had passed their home had grown more and more desolate, and their hearts, especially the mother-heart, had longed for the wonted and joyous company of their son. The father, manlike, had suppressed and concealed his sorrow. The mother gave way daily more and more to her grief and yearning, and implored her husband to relent and forgive. In this agitated, saddened state of mind they entered the week that commemorates the birth of the Prince of Peace, the great teacher of human and divine forgiveness.

On Holy Night, as the old couple sat lonely

and wretched in their richly appointed but unhappy home, filled with tender and regretful memories of their boy across the great waters, a servant brought in to them the Christmas greeting of their exiled son and the package containing the startling revelation of his poverty and distress. They opened it, and realized for the first time how destitute and wretched his condition must be. It was too much! The obstinacy of the proud, self-willed old merchant broke down at the thought that his only son and heir should suffer such want and indignity. The mother revelled in the picture of her lovely grandchild. The spirit of Christmas had conquered. That very night the parental forgiveness was wired across the ocean to make glad the hearts of the young people, and give the wife, for a second time in Boston, a Happy Christmas. The hard-hearted agent in that city, who had fulfilled his instructions all too literally, was rebuked, and instructed to provide amply for the speedy return of the little family to their native country and the parental home.

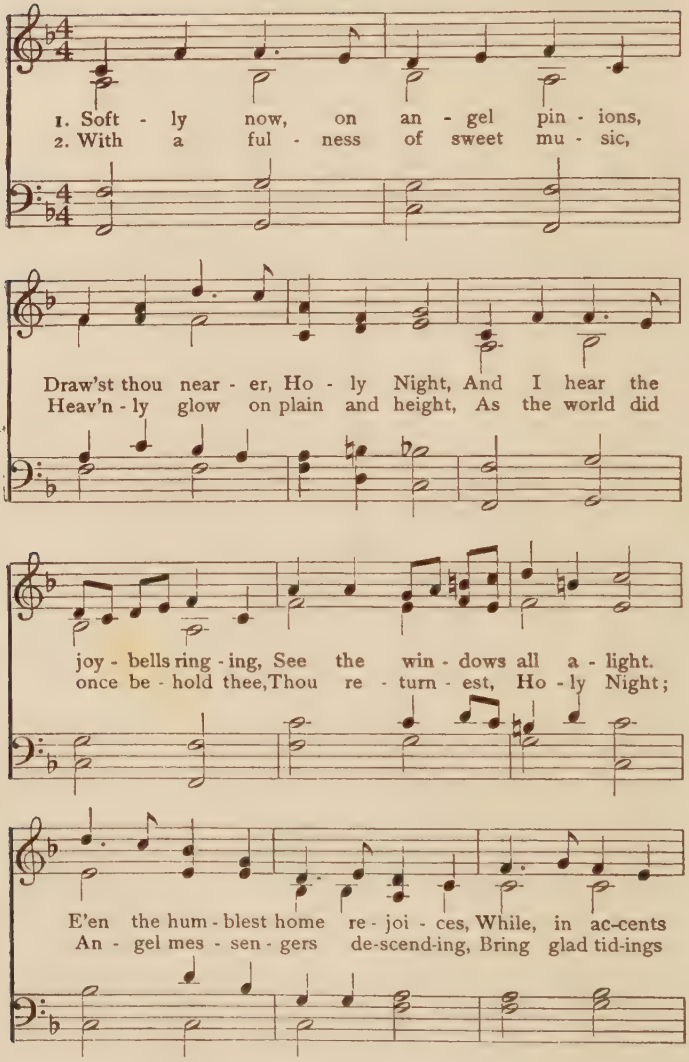
One day, a few weeks later, the great patrician mansion in the old German city was full of stir and happy anticipation. For behold, the son

that had been lost to them was found, and soon would be with them once more. With eagerness he crossed the threshold of his childhood's home and was folded in the arms of his parents. With pride and joy he presented to them his beautiful wife, who was to become the comfort and strength of their declining years. As she held up to its adoring grandparents the lovely child which above all else was to be the angel of reconciliation among them, it was such a scene as the devout Masters of the olden time loved to paint on their canvasses — the Holy Mother with the infant Christ, the bringer of light and love and peace to earth, the fair prophecy of a better time coming when the strife and hate, and greed and cruelty of men shall be stilled, and a little child shall lead them into love and joy and peace.

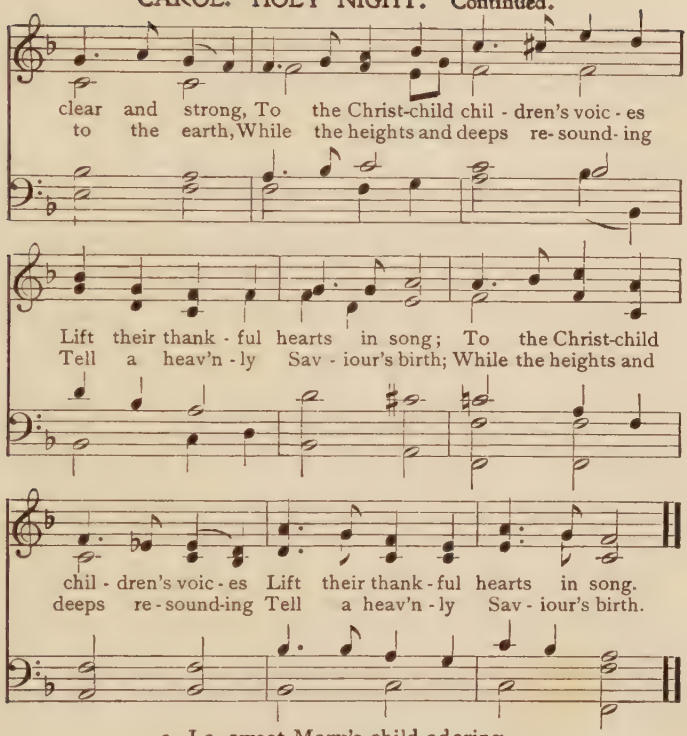


CAROL. HOLY NIGHT.

C. W. W.



CAROL. HOLY NIGHT. Continued.



3. Lo, sweet Mary's child adoring,
Orient kings, with myrrh and gold,
Knelt beside the happy shepherds,
Guided by the star of old.
While the holy mother, bending
O'er the babe upon her knee,
As its wondrous gaze fell on her,
Thrilled with nameless ecstacy.

4. Holy Night, in starry splendor
Solemn rising on our eyes,
Oh, within our hearts rise also,
Star of Life, in us arise!
See, the earth and skies are radiant,
Love's own light doth on us fall!
Peace will yet return to bless us,
Love shall be enthroned o'er all.

Oakland, Cal., 1894. From the German of R. Prutz by C. W. W.



CHRISTMAS IN THE TRENCHES

CHRISTMAS as a festival of the Christian Church and home is familiar and endeared to us. But the last place we should seek for its observance is the battlefield, with its armed soldiers, its hatred and fury, its violent cannonading, its fierce encounters, its suffering and agony. Yet even here its blest ministry extends, its gentle presence has made itself felt and mitigated and overcome for the time at least, the brutality of war.

Such is the lesson of an incident of the Franco-Prussian War, related by an officer of the French Army.

"On the night of the 25th of December, 1870," he tells us, "after the siege of Paris, with its train of sufferings and privations — unfortunately also of outbreaks of hatred and fratri-

cidal strife within the walls of the doomed city — had already lasted many weeks, I was in command of an advanced post in the trenches. My company, to which I had just been appointed, consisted of Parisian gardes mobiles, fine fellows, ready for any deed that required courage, but not renowned for their amenableness to discipline. It was a bitter cold night. The clear, frosty skies above us, splendidly gemmed with stars, seemed fairly to shiver; the wan half-moon illumined a vast, snow-covered, spectral plain. So close to our own were the advanced posts of the Germans that we could plainly distinguish their challenge, 'Wer Da?' (Who goes there?) and the ring of their steel-shod rifle butts on the icy ground, while they doubtless heard with equal clearness the 'Qui Vive?' of our sentries.

"The furious cannonade, and even more murderous firing from the rifle-pits, had been interrupted for a brief interval. Profound silence reigned. It was approaching midnight, and I was stamping my feet on the earth to warm myself a bit when an alert, active fellow, with finely cut features and an intelligent, energetic expression of countenance, stepped out of the line of gardes and made a curious request of me.

"'Captain,' he began, 'may I have leave of absence from the watch for a moment?'

"'Nonsense! Step back into your place instantly. Do you suppose I am less cold than you? Wait a little; when the firing begins again you'll be warm enough.'

"He did not move. Still saluting, he continued: 'Captain, I beg you, give me permission. The matter will take only a few moments. I assure you, you will not regret it.'

"'The deuce I will not! Who are you, anyhow, and what do you want to do?'

"'Who am I? Why, I am B——,' and here he mentioned a name at that time very celebrated in the musical world. 'What I intend to do must, please, remain my own secret.'

"'Then let it remain undone. No further foolishness. If I were to let one private return to Paris tonight I might as well send back the entire company.'

"'Why, captain,' he replied, smilingly, 'I have no desire to go to Paris; I want to go in this direction,' and he pointed over towards the German lines. 'I ask for only two minutes' leave of absence.'

"His bearing and words had awakened my

curiosity. I decided to grant his request, remarking as I did so that he was probably seeking his own death.

"He at once leaped out of the trench and advanced towards the enemy. In the silence of the night we heard the snow crunch under his feet, and followed with our eyes the black silhouette of his figure, which the shadow cast by the moonlight seemed mysteriously to lengthen. At ten paces distance the brave fellow stood fast, gave a military salute, and with powerful, deep-chested voice and great fervor of expression began to sing the beautiful Christmas hymn of the French composer Adam:

"'Minuit, Chrétiens, c'est l'heure solennelle
Ou l'homme-Dieu descendit jusqu' à nous.'

("'Tis midnight, Christians, the solemn hour
At which the God-man descended unto us.')

"All this happened so unexpectedly, was so simple, the song itself gained such beauty and impressiveness through the outward circumstances — the night and its sacred memories, the strangely contrasted surroundings — that we Parisians, we doubters and scoffers, listened with genuine and deep emotion. The German portion of his audience must have been swayed

by similar feelings. No doubt more than one among them was reminded of his far-away home, his family and the children gathered joyously around the Christmas tree. Not a weapon was uplifted against the daring singer, no command was given, no call or steps heard. In unbroken silence the men of both armies listened to this touching reminder of their home life and their religion.

"His song ended, the brave singer saluted once more, turned on his heel and marched leisurely back to our trenches.

"'Captain, I report my return. Do you regret your permission?'

"Before I could answer, our attention was called once more to the German side, where, advancing towards us, the tall, helmeted figure of an artilleryman now became visible. Ten steps or more he moved forward, just as the other had done, halted, cooly made a military salute, and, in the midst of the wintry night, in the midst of all these armed men who for months had had no other thought than to destroy one another, he uplifted with full voice and heart a German Christmas hymn, the words and music by Martin Luther, a hymn of praise and thankfulness for the lowly Christ-

child who came into the world eighteen centuries ago to bring the divine gift of love to mankind, and whom men have so poorly listened to and obeyed.

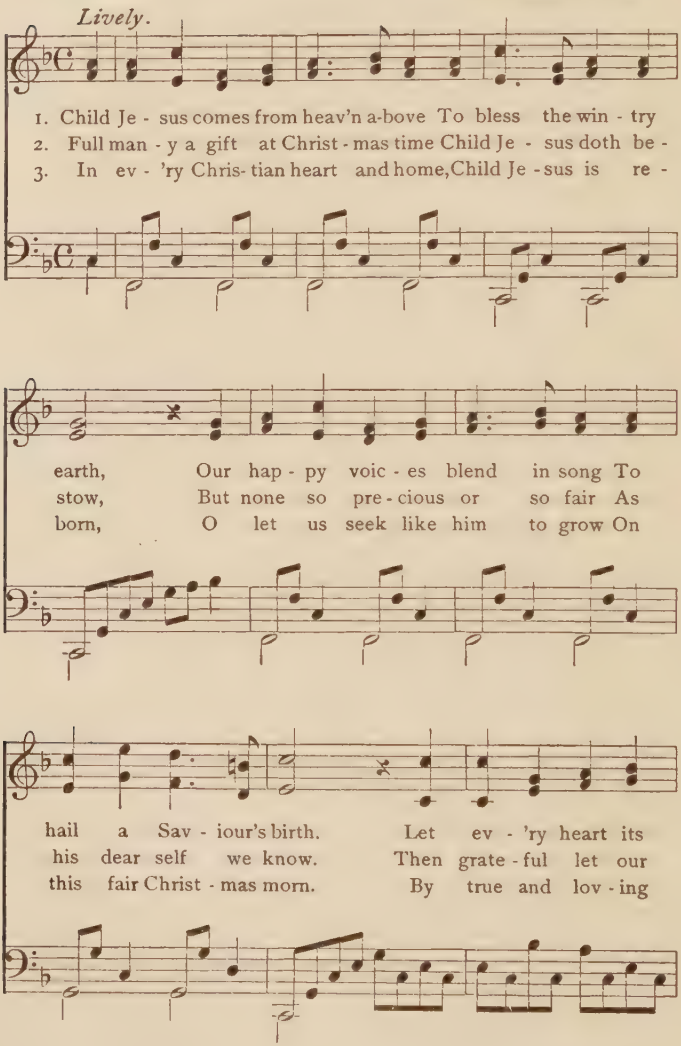
"'Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her,
Ich bring euch gute, neue Mähr.'
("'From heaven above to earth I come,
To bring glad news to every home.')

"So sang the German soldier, and cheerily his voice rang out upon the night. He ended his song with the joyous cry, 'Weihnachtszeit! Weihnachtszeit!' (Christmas time!) And from the German trenches came in full chorus the glad refrain, 'Weihnachtszeit!' With one voice the French soldiers responded, 'Noël! Noël!' (Christmas! Christmas!) And for a brief space, at least, both hostile armies were united in a common sentiment of peace and good will on earth.

"The artilleryman slowly retraced his steps and disappeared in the trenches. An hour later the cannon from the forts resumed their angry controversy, and from the rifle pits bullets flew to and fro across the battlefield as before."

CAROL. CHILD JESUS

C. W. W. RICHARD HOL.




trib - ute bring, With grate - ful joy its prais - es sing, Sing
voic - es ring, Praise God with hap - py car - ol ling, Sing
lives may we Each strive a Christ-mas gift to be; Sing
f
prais - es, Sing prais - es un - to God! Child
rit.
Je sus to - day on earth is born!



THE STORY OF AN EMPTY SLEEVE

A YEAR or two after the close of our civil war, while on a visit in a small town in Southern Illinois, I became acquainted with a young man of erect and soldierly bearing, with an empty sleeve pinned across his breast which challenged my grateful respect. But I honored him still more when I learned the story of that empty sleeve.

Filled with patriotic ardor, he had enlisted in the Union army at the very beginning of the war. After two years of hard service, one day while on picket duty on the eve of a great battle he was taken prisoner. Together with other captured members of his company, he was sent to the rear of the Confederate line. As evening came on the prisoners were sepa-

rated, each being assigned to a special guard for the night, preparatory to sending them all South next morning to the prison-pen of Belle Isle.

There had been considerable carelessness on the part of the Southern soldiery in guarding those they had taken captive. In consequence quite a number of Union prisoners had recently escaped. This led to the promulgation of severe orders by the Confederate commander to prevent its recurrence. Each guard was to be responsible with his own life for the prisoner assigned to him. If his charge escaped, he would be shot in his stead.

Our young Illinoisian was put in the keeping of a youthful Southern soldier, a mere boy of 16. He proved to be an amiable, kind-hearted lad, who did not conceal his sympathy with the unfortunate situation and deep despondency of his prisoner. He shared his scant rations with him, and tried to relieve his apprehensions and comfort him. As night came on he built a brushwood fire, and the two men sat by it in friendly discourse. The young Confederate had only recently joined the rebel army, and from necessity rather than choice. Glad to find a responsive listener, he poured into his ear the

simple story of his happy home, of his mother's grief at parting with her only son, of his home-sickness and distaste for a soldier's life. His listener, while absorbed by his own misery, could not but feel a liking for the soft-voiced, warm-hearted Southern lad, and was grateful for the personal kindness shown him.

So the night wore on. Toward midnight the prisoner lay down upon the cold ground, and sought both to forget his misfortune and gain the necessary strength for what the morrow might bring him. But slumber deserted his fevered brain and anxious heart. As he tossed about restlessly, he meditated plans for escape. Gazing up with wakeful, wistful eyes through the tops of the pine-trees to the frosty night-heavens above, he saw the gleaming stars, and thought of the Infinite Power and Wisdom throned on high. Never before had he prayed so fervently for help and strength as in that darkest hour of his life. As he prayed, comfort and peace seemed to enter his soul. Presently his eyes closed in slumber. For a moment he waked again as he felt a soft something gently thrown over him. It was the army overcoat of his guard, which that kindly fellow had taken off his own back to impart comfort to his cap-

tive. The human touch in this action warmed his heart even more than did the cloak his limbs.

Toward morning there was a forward movement of the Union troops toward the Confederate line. Their pickets were so near that our prisoner, starting up out of his sleep, could distinctly hear their cries and challenges. But all in camp, save himself, seemed insensible to it. The watch-fires around him burned low, and captors and captives alike were drowsy with slumber. The prisoner lifted his head and looked cautiously at his guard. The Southern lad, worn out with his unaccustomed and arduous service, and unmindful of both his duty and his danger, was fast asleep. The flickering fire-light revealed him seated at the foot of a large pine-tree and leaning heavily against it. His musket had slipped from his nerveless grasp and lay on the ground beside him.

To leap noiselessly to his feet and secure it was the work of an instant; as softly our prisoner removed and transferred to his own head the military cap of his careless guard. The situation was now reversed: the captive had become the captor. He looked carefully about him. His action had been unnoticed by any

of the Confederates in his immediate vicinity. Cloaked and armed as he now was, it was quite possible for him to steal away in the darkness toward the picket-line, and then make a wild dash for the Union ranks and liberty! As with beating heart he stood listening, he heard the muffled cries of his Northern comrades not far away, and the prospect of escape thrilled all his pulses with eagerness.

He turned once more to look at his sleeping guard. The latter lay peacefully, a smile upon his lips. As he gazed intently upon him, there suddenly flashed across his mind the order of the day before concerning the safekeeping of prisoners. If he were to succeed in escaping, this boy would be shot. He had heard the warning with his own ears. The recollection of the simple confidences of this youth, the only son of his mother, the sympathy and kindness he had shown him — all seemed to burn themselves into his mind. The gray Confederate overcoat became heavy as lead on his shoulders. A rising wave of pity and tenderness surged in his heart. Should he who had prayed so fervently to God to save him, himself doom a brother man and fellow soldier to destruction?

On the other hand, was it not right for him to avail himself of this most promising opportunity for escape, which seemed to have been sent him by Divine Providence?

Before him, if he declined to avail himself of this chance, was the nameless horror of the prison camp. Close at hand, within reach, were his Union comrades and freedom! But the means of his deliverance was the death of an innocent boy!

Such were the conflicting emotions that raged in the breast of the young volunteer, as he stood there in the sheltering thicket at early morning and fought the greatest battle of his life.

Its issue was not long uncertain. Little by little the nobler will in him triumphed over his lower inclination, duty won the victory over craven fear, and human love over self-seeking. He walked calmly, resolutely back, and awakened his heedless guard, showed him how easy would have been his prisoner's escape, reminded him of his danger, and then, lying down once more, awaited the coming day.

I do not wonder that next morning as our young hero turned his face steadfastly toward a Southern prison, the grateful Southern boy shed

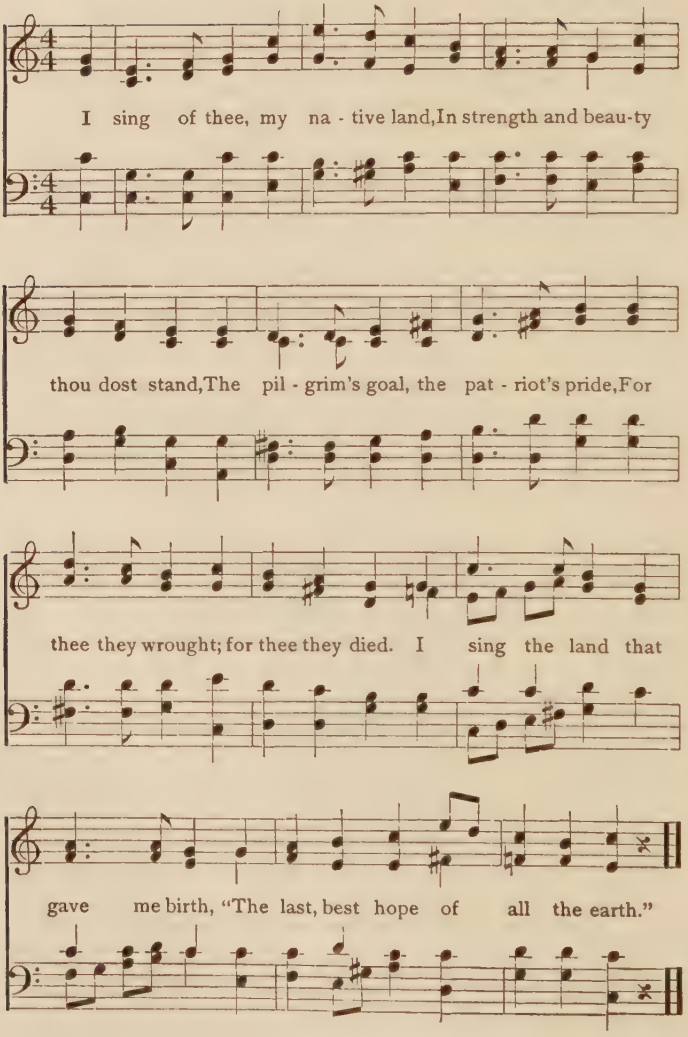
tears of genuine sorrow in parting with his high-minded and generous prisoner.

The missing arm, which I had noted, was lost a few months later, when, with other Union prisoners, he endeavored to break out of the prison stockade at Belle-Isle and achieve his liberty. The attempt was frustrated and he was shot down. His comrades dragged him back into the stockade, and by their rough surgery saved his life at the cost of a limb. It was the price he paid for these repeated displays of a brave and self-sacrificing spirit even amid the terrors and cruelties of war.



MY COUNTRY.

C. W. W.



MY COUNTRY.

I sing of thee, my native land,
In strength and beauty thou dost stand,
The pilgrims' goal, the patriots' pride,
For thee they wrought; for thee they died.
I sing the land that gave me birth,
"The last, best hope of all the earth!"

I sing thy fair and broad domain,
Its valleys rich with golden grain,
Its mighty rivers' quickening tide,
Its lofty hills that treasure hide;
I sing thy cities' wealth and power,—
Our favored nation's precious dower.

I sing thy faith and large increase
In knowledge, virtue, justice, peace;
Thy gates swung open wide and free
In welcome to humanity.
I sing thy trust in man and right,
In reason's power and freedom's might.

I sing, O God! thy bounteous hand
Which still hath kept my native land,
Whose mercies o'er all peoples poured,
By all invoked, by all adored,—
O may its blessing ever rest
Upon the land I love the best!

MAY, 1917 C. W. W.

Note. Verse 1. Abraham Lincoln's phrase for America's mission—"the last, best hope of earth."



A NEW ENGLAND CONSCIENCE

THE minister had arranged an exchange of pulpits with a colleague in a neighboring town. As his appointment was at some distance, and several lines of electrics had to be taken in succession, he made an early start that Sunday morning. It had rained heavily during the night and the skies still looked threatening. He therefore took with him his best umbrella. It had a crooked handle like to a shepherd's staff, and as our minister walked briskly down the quiet street it swung jauntily on his arm. Passing the house of an esteemed parishioner the minister's attention was arrested by a handsome large apple-tree in his front yard, bearing a fine crop, ruddy and golden. One ripened apple had fallen from the tree and lay in the wet grass temptingly near the fence.

How luscious it looked! The minister paused and reflected. What a delicious addition it would be to the bit of lunch his prudent wife had insisted on his taking with him as a resource in case no invitation to dine came to him from some hospitable hearer of the word that Sunday! If it were not so unconscionably early he might call on his esteemed parishioner and ask his permission to appropriate the golden fruit which so allured him. It would doubtless have been willingly granted. Should a mere formality, then, prevent its transfer to his own pocket? The inherited propensities of our common mother Eve were asserting themselves in the minister. He had no time to make long parley with his conscience. Looking up at the curtained windows he saw no man. The neighboring houses were steeped in slumberous silence. With quick resolution the minister poked his crooked umbrella handle through the palings and drew the longed-for apple toward him. Seizing it joyously he thrust it into his overcoat pocket and hurried down the avenue to catch his car.

His wife's forecast proved a true one. No invitation to dinner came to him, and on his tiresome homeward ride he nibbled furtively at

the lunch she had provided, and munched the juicy apple he had so deftly added to his frugal store; not without a twinge of conscience as he asked himself why it is that stolen fruit always seems to taste the sweetest? In any case, he comforted himself, no one but he and his Maker knew of the transaction, and, if one might dare to imagine such a thing, the Lord would have a sufficient sense of humor to forgive him for it.

It turned out otherwise. A few days later, towards evening, there appeared at the parsonage door the esteemed parishioner whose fruit he had appropriated, accompanied by his good wife. The worthy pair bore between them a heavy basket whose contents were concealed from sight. Setting down the basket in the hall the couple followed their somewhat embarrassed pastor into his study, and began an indifferent conversation which quite allayed any suspicions he might have had as to the purport of their call. As they rose to depart, the esteemed parishioner put on an air of great seriousness, and gazing keenly at his minister, delivered himself of the following homily:

"My dear pastor: When I was a lad on a farm, away down in Maine, the village minister,

Parson Wheeler, was a near neighbor of ours. He was not a gifted preacher, but in every other respect was highly thought of and beloved by his people. As the small salary they paid for his services would not support him and his family he eked out a living by farming, in which he was quite an expert. Among other products he grew a fine field of watermelons which was the admiration of the neighborhood, and watched by none more eagerly than by the boys of the village. When the fruit was well ripened we boys, on a dark night, made a concerted raid on the parson's melon-patch, and carried off a generous share of his crop, to be devoured by us with guilty joy in secret.

The very next day at sundown, Parson Wheeler drove into our door-yard, seated in his ram-shackle old buggy, and asked to see me. Conscious of my sinful share in the pillage of the night before, I went shamefacedly, with my knees knocking together, to the door to meet what I was apprehensive would be a severe calling to account, followed by a suitable chastisement from my angry father. To my amazement the worthy man, after gazing at me keenly for a few seconds from beneath his shaggy eyebrows, suddenly beamed upon me

with the kindliest of smiles as he said: 'Charles, last night some mean-spirited and dishonest boys broke into my melon-patch and robbed it of some of its finest fruit, fruit which I have been months and years trying to bring to perfection. Of course, I was angry and felt badly about the matter; not so much at the loss of the melons as to think that after all these years of godly preaching and teaching, and of good bringing up in Christian homes, there should be boys in our village so low-down and mean as to steal from their neighbor. But, of course, Charles, not all the boys in our village are of that kind. I know some who would scorn to do so base a deed, high-minded, honest boys, like the son of my neighbor Thomas. So, to reward you for your honesty, Charles, and encourage you always to keep the straight and narrow way, I have picked out for you one of the finest melons that the thieves left me. Here it is, Charles,' — and bending down, the old gentleman lifted up and pressed into my reluctant hands a handsome, large watermelon.

"Never before had I been so utterly humiliated, so severely chastised. I began to stammer forth my confession. But the parson

would not permit a word. Riveting his keen gaze upon me as if he would read my very soul he gathered up the reins and drove away repeating: 'I like an honest boy, such as you, Charles.' It would have been a positive relief to my feelings if he had only condescended to give me a well-deserved thrashing; for I knew well enough that he more than suspected my complicity in the raid. The worthy parson understood human and especially boy nature. He could not have chosen a better way of making me conscious of my wrongdoing and preventing its recurrence. Thereafter, not only was his melon-patch safe from my intrusion, but through life, I have cherished the lesson the old gentleman so effectively taught me."

"Now, my dear pastor," the worthy man continued, and a suspicion of a smile crossed his countenance, "this incident of my boyhood was recalled to me early last Sunday morning, as I stood at my window shaving myself, hidden by the lace curtains from the passer-by. For to my surprise and sorrow I beheld a well-known minister of this town standing before my house and looking up longingly at my well-stocked apple-tree. Now, if he had only asked

my permission he might have had all the apples he could have carried away. But imagine my astonishment and grief when this preacher of the gospel and expounder of the Ten Commandments, after assuring himself that nobody was observing him, thrust a crooked handled umbrella through the palings, cunningly drew the fallen apples to him, pocketed them, and made a hasty departure down the street. It certainly was a shocking revelation of ministerial depravity.

"On reflection, I comforted myself with the thought that there were preachers — my own honored pastor among them — to whom such an act would have been impossible. Furthermore, it seemed to me that such probity of character, such strict righteousness of conduct as theirs was worthy of recognition and reward. And so wife and I have come hither, bringing with us an appropriate gift as a mark of our appreciation for an honest minister, who would scorn to steal even a stray apple."

Whereupon the worthy couple went out and fetched the heavy basket they had deposited in the hallway. They removed the cloth which had concealed its contents, disclosing a collection of the finest apples their tree had

yielded. Setting it down before the discomfited minister they turned away to hide their amusement, and departing, left their pastor to settle conclusions with his basket of apples and his New England conscience.



OH, COULD I TELL IT!

When I was still an urchin small
'Tis long ago — but I recall
My playmates oft tormented me;
Then homewards I ran angrily,
And sobbing cried: "O stop your bother!
I'll go and tell it to my mother!

I grew in time a little man,
And — as boys will — I oft began
To tease and quarrel with my mates;
But faring ill — O cruel fates!
Smarting with blows from one or t'other,
I went and told it to my mother.

When, later on, I went to school,
Too strict I found the teacher's rule.
I tried so hard to do his will,
But all in vain, he scolded still,
Until I sought my tears to smother,
And homeward turned to tell my mother.

Oh, since that long-departed day
My mother dear has passed away,
Sorrow and pain have wrung my breast,
Till oft, with care and woe oppressed,
I think of this time and that other,
Oh, could I tell it to my mother!

Translated from the German
By C. W. W.

OAKLAND, CAL., 1892



WITH STARR KING IN CALIFORNIA

IN the spring of 1861 a youth of sixteen, exiled from his native city of Boston because of incipient lung troubles, sought in sunny California restoration to health and opportunity for self-support. He was accompanied by his widowed mother, a well-known teacher of her native German tongue in Boston, and by his younger brother. The little family were so devotedly attached to each other, and the mother's anxiety for her eldest boy was so great, that it was decided they should all make the new venture together. They had few or no acquaintances in "the land of sunshine and of gold." Their only reliance was their earnest purpose and capacity for service, and the Providence which had hitherto guided their

family destinies. Kind friends furnished them with letters of introduction to residents of San Francisco. One of these addressed to the Rev. Thomas Starr King, the Unitarian minister of that city, proved to be the golden key which opened to them not only the riches of his opulent and genial nature, but the door, also, of social, business and religious opportunity.

Parting from their loved city and friends they set sail from New York harbor by the steamship North Star, of the Vanderbilt line, bound for Aspinwall, or Colon, as it is now called, the Atlantic terminus of the Panama Railway. The projected transcontinental railway had not even been begun, and their only alternative route would have been the long and wearisome journey by wagon across the plains, or the still more exhausting voyage by sea around Cape Horn. We must not dwell at too great length on the interesting incidents of their journey. It had its hardships. Over eight hundred passengers were crowded into accomodations designed for the legal limits of possibly five hundred. The food was poor and insufficient. But the storm-tossed Caribbean Sea was mercifully calm, the heavens were bright with sunshine, and hope perched upon their prow.

The vessel reached Colon safely and proceeded to disembark its passengers and their personal belongings. All were happy to be once more on firm ground. There was nothing of interest in the shabby town or its ugly surroundings. They had sufficient to do to transfer their luggage safely to the waiting train, and to prevent its spoliation by the swarm of ragged and thievish natives who surrounded them and noisily proffered their services. The scenery of the Isthmus, as the train slowly moved across it, was bewilderingly novel and beautiful. It had rained heavily, the rays of the morning sun beat fiercely down, the tropical forest, dense with vegetation and brilliant with color, steamed with moisture and oppressed them with its rank exhalations. Bright-tinted birds flew and flashed in the sun, the wild things and insect life of the jungle added their din to the clatter of the train. They crossed the swollen and muddy Chagres and other streams, catching glimpses here and there of rude cabins built on their glistening banks, with sprawling black men lazily stretched in the shade of enormous, broad-leafed palmettos, the survivors of the deadly fevers and miasma which had carried off so many of their fellow-laborers on the rail-

way that it was estimated every sleeper they laid cost a human life. Arrived on the Pacific side of the Isthmus they gazed with awe upon the blue and sun-lit expanse of the mighty ocean to which they were to commit themselves for a fortnight longer. Because of the prevailing yellow fever and other dangers they were not allowed to enter the historic city of Panama, not far away. The work of transferring the passengers and their effects in barges and lighters to the steamship St. Louis, which was anchored in deep water out in the bay, began at once. The little family of pilgrims took their part in the routine and diversions of the ocean voyage that followed. Day after day they steamed northward through tepid and untroubled waters; day after day the interminable mountain ranges of Central America and Mexico stretched blue and hazy on the starboard side of the vessel, while the sea-gulls flashed and veered, with hoarse cries, overhead. The heat was enervating. The passengers soon exhausted their resources of information, gossip and amusement. A common longing for the end of their wearisome journey possessed them.

A welcome interruption was a day's call at the Mexican port of Acapulco. As the vessel

turned and headed straight for the mountain wall it seemed as if she must be wrecked upon it, but with wonderful precision a narrow channel was entered, the inlet to a beautiful, landlocked harbor, surrounded by lofty mountains green with luxurious vegetation to their summits. It was the era of the French occupation of Mexico under the ill-fated Austrian prince Maximilian. Two French war vessels in the harbor gave them a noisy welcome, as did the U. S. sloop-of-war Cyane. As they steamed to their anchorage a fleet of small boats hovered around, tempting the passengers with native wares and the alluring, but in their case dangerous fruits of the tropics. Swimming in a state of nature and of grace, a score of children paddled for hours around the ship, dexterously diving for the pennies thrown them, and stowing them away in man's first pocketbook, his cheeks. A party of passengers landed, but found little to interest them in the poor town with its squat, mud-walled dwellings and sweltering heat. A little company of them captured the quaint old fort which commanded the entrance to the harbor, pushing aside the garrison, a single native soldier, who sought to dispute their entrance. A Mexican confided to them

that not a mile away was an outpost of rebels against the French authority. Following his guidance they walked by a narrow trail through the tropical forest, marvelous in its luxuriant growth and brilliant coloring. A sudden challenge brought them to a halt. In an instant they were surrounded by swarthy and ragged soldiery pressing their rusty bayonets uncomfortably close to their breasts. Reassured concerning their nationality and purpose they grinned a good-natured welcome, gratefully accepted small gifts of tobacco and money, and led their visitors to their camp by a running stream, where their women were washing the family wardrobe and preparing the midday meal. After some friendly parley on the political situation two of the natives made a bed of leaves under a palm tree, after which they climbed like cats to its crown. Presently a small shower of cocoanuts came tumbling down on the leafy mattress below. The soldiers, picking them up, perforated each with a bayonet thrust and handed them to their American friends with compliments and bows. Never did a draught taste more delicious than this which Dame Nature herself had stored away in anticipation of their coming. A boom-

ing cannon from the ship in the harbor warned the party to end their visit and return at once. With mutual expressions of good-will and cheers for the Mexican Republic the party separated, and the Americans found their way back to their ship.

As they sailed out of the harbor of Acapulco, the French warships gave an exhibit of gunnery. High on the mountain side a Mexican national fort had been built. With a terrific roar the war-vessels discharged a number of shells against it. The passengers saw them rise and curve and fall. Then a great cloud of dust arose and obscured all further trace of their effect. As they steamed away they looked back. The cloud had lifted. There on the mountain side the Mexican flag still waved proudly, while under it its defenders were seen dancing ecstatic fandangoes on the ramparts and hurling defiance at the foreign invaders.

On the 18th of May, 1861, after a journey of 24 days from New York, the pilgrims passed at night through the Golden Gate, and entering San Francisco Bay "cast four anchors out and wished for the day." There was little sleep for the passengers, who gazed with suspense at the twinkling lights of the hidden city, or with

thankfulness at the larger lights above which had guided their course to this El Dorado of their dreams. The day brought both delight and disappointment. Unveiled in the morning sun lay the splendid bay and its narrow, mountain-rimmed entrance, the Golden Gate, an entrancing spectacle. Covering an area of 465 square miles this superb sheet of water is surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills and mountains green with vegetation, save where lofty peaks like Monte Diablo and Tamalpais lift their rugged summits into the region of clouds and storms. Nestling at their foot a score of towns and villages encircle it. Great ferry boats continually ply between them, like shuttles in a loom. The largest fleet of ocean-going sailing vessels gathered in any port of the world and many steamships lie anchored offshore awaiting their cargoes of grain and wool, lumber and ore, or discharge their freight at the wharves of the great metropolis of the Pacific Coast, San Francisco.

The latter city as it was disclosed that early morning, over fifty years ago, was not an attractive sight. Hardly more than a dozen years had elapsed since the discovery of gold in California made it the goal of one of the most

remarkable migrations from all parts of the world known in modern history. The sleepy settlement of mud-walled huts and shanties under the shelter of an insignificant Mexican fort, as Dana described it in his Two Years Before the Mast, had been transformed into a hustling, thriving American community of 100,000 souls. The young city still bore the marks of haste and heterogeneousness, of conflagrations, earthquakes and lawlessness, and the lingering doubt whether with the threatened exhaustion of the gold fields it also might not relapse into dullness and decay. Its streets were carried straight over the steep, bare hills of the treeless, wind-swept, fog-haunted peninsula. The houses, mostly one and two-storied wooden structures monotonously gray in color, had little architectural or other beauty, though often redeemed by pretty flower gardens. The public edifices were poor and mean compared with those of a later era. The streets and sidewalks, chiefly paved with wooden planks, were infested with fleas and rats, and swept by whirlwinds of dust raised by the daily ocean breezes, which took the place of scavengers.

Such was the first of the three San Franciscos the present writer has lived to behold. Cer-

tainly it was not alluring to eyes accustomed to the ordered beauty of a New England civilization. But when, leaving the city behind, one ascended the steep and desolate sand-hills and looked down upon the blue and sparkling waters of the islanded, many-masted bay, with its encircling wall of mountains swathed in hazy bands of color; or north-ward to the misty headlands of Marin County and the impetuous currents of the Golden Gate sweeping to the ocean the vast discharge of the great rivers of Central California; or westward to where the "still Pacific" rolled in endlessly its whitecapped breakers upon the shining beaches, its ceaseless roar penetrated by the hoarse bark of those clumsy sentinels, the sea-lions, tumbling in the foaming waves that ever beat upon their sea-girt rocks — in his admiring and exalted mood he speedily forgot all the deprivations and discomforts of his new experience. The charm of California took possession of him, and he rejoiced in the happy fate which had brought him to this fair and sun-lit land, and hospitable, unconventional and optimistic community.

The little family on landing found a temporary abiding place in the Globe Hotel, a new structure whose rear windows commanded a

view of the adjacent Chinese quarter. They watched with curiosity, and the mental discomfort which usually attends one's first contact with a different and unfamiliar race, the habits and ways of this, to them, strange people.

Their next step was to present their letters of introduction and seek for some bread-winning employment. On every hand they were received with the greatest cordiality and learned to know the easy accessibility of California society. In this respect it formed an agreeable contrast to the reserve and self-sufficiency of Atlantic communities. Everybody they met had been an immigrant like themselves. Except among the Southern element there was no insistence on family, or culture, or even wealth. The social order was new and ever-changing. There were few established canons or conventions. The millionaire today might be a beggar tomorrow, and the beggar a millionaire. Ability and energy of character, personal amiability, free-handedness, an optimistic spirit and readiness to believe in and work for the California community, these were the passports to popular favor and social success. Never was there so large a proportion of interesting and gifted people as came together in that early day in

San Francisco. There were unworthy and undesirable elements among them, as was to be expected from the circumstances attending the settlement of the Pacific Coast. But the outlawry and flagrant vices of a still earlier day had been put down with an iron hand, and the moral average was quite as high as at the East, while the conditions were far more favorable for the development of whatever was of value in a man's individual talents and character. The remoteness of the older communities of the United States compelled the Californians to avail themselves of their own resources of talent, culture and public spirit, with gratifying results. Not the least influential in this ethical and cultural development were its pioneers of New England birth and training.

Among their letters was one addressed to Capt. Amos Noyes, former harbor-master of San Francisco, and at that time one of its Port-wardens. He was originally of Newburyport, and a fine specimen of an American navigator. A man of sterling character he possessed the confidence of the entire community. He was loyal in his church attachments, maintained New England traditions in his family life, and proved a kind and helpful friend.

After some weeks had been passed in anxious seeking for employment, and the family fortunes were beginning to look desperate, Captain Noyes offered the elder son for two months the position of Secretary of the Board of Portwardens, which had become vacant. At the close of this term the Democratic appointees would go out of office, the Union party having triumphed at the last state election. The incoming governor, Leland Stanford, would have the appointment of the new Board and its Secretary. The compensation was one hundred dollars a month. The young man gladly accepted the position, whose duties proved to be congenial and not exacting. The wish that he might be able to retain it naturally arose, since it would enable him to support the family and end all their anxiety. It had already become manifest that there would be little demand for the mother's services as a German teacher in that new society. But the young man had rendered no political service and hence had no claim whatever upon the position he desired to retain. Only one possibility remained. Thomas Starr King, who had come to California the year previous, had already made himself widely influential through his eloquence

and his patriotism. The recent success of the Union cause at the polls was in no slight degree attributable to him. Governor Stanford was his personal friend and parishioner. If now Mr. King were to ask for this small post it surely would not be denied him. But how could a newcomer, known to him only through a letter of introduction, venture to require of him such a favor? The necessities of the situation made the young man bold. Mr. King had received him so warmly and expressed so much interest in their family fortunes that he felt encouraged to call once more on the man whose sermons on Sunday attracted a crowded attendance of the most intelligent and influential citizens of the state, and had given him an exalted idea of his intellectual and moral qualities. But the young man shall tell his own story of what followed.

"I nerved myself for the task and went to see Starr King. The cordiality of my reception gave me courage. I told him of my fruitless endeavors to secure permanent work, of our family's circumstances, of my present temporary position and longing to retain it. Never was a story more sympathetically listened and responded to. Starr King possessed the ten-



STARR KING MONUMENT IN GOLDEN GATE PARK, SAN FRANCISCO

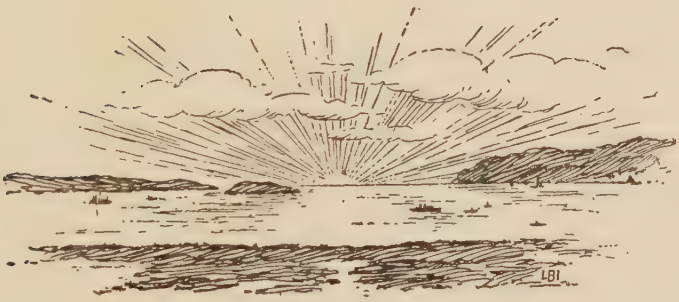
derest heart, the most unselfish and loving spirit of any man I have ever met. He assured me of his readiness to do all in his power to further my aim, and that he felt peculiarly drawn to it because when a youth of sixteen he himself had secured a similar position in the Charlestown Navy Yard, which had enabled him to support his mother and sisters for some years until he entered his present profession. He felt he had aided the Union cause by his addresses. Yet the only reward he ever asked was the appointment of Frank Bret Harte, a talented young Californian, to be secretary of the San Francisco Mint, which was granted. Governor Stanford was to be in town the very next day. He would call on him and ask my appointment. It was very uncertain. The position might be filled already. I must indulge in no undue hopes. He would do his best. It was arranged that I should call on Mr. King in the evening of the next day and learn the result of the interview.

The next day was for me a very anxious one. So much depended on its issue for me and mine. At noon a terrific storm burst over the city. The rain fell in torrents, flooding the lower streets, while the waters of the bay swept over

the wharves. Alone in the office, as the hour for closing arrived I mechanically put the records in the safe and waited for the fury of the storm to subside. I was inexpressibly sad. My usual hopefulness had deserted me entirely. Suddenly I was surprised to hear a sharp rap at the door. I opened it, and there, without, stood Thomas Starr King, his cheeks flushed, his luminous eyes filled with joy, and his hand extended as he cried: 'It's all right, my boy! It's all right! I've seen Governor Stanford. He was very cordial, and you are to hold your position for the two years of his administration. I congratulate you. I'm so glad!' But I, though rejoicing at the happy news, could see only the raindrops that dripped from his long, lank hair and saturated garments: 'Oh, Mr. King, why did you come so far in such a deluge to tell me this? Why, I was to call on you this evening and learn my fate!' 'Never mind, my dear fellow. It's only a little rain — my umbrella was blown to bits at the corner. I felt you must be very anxious about the matter, so I came right down to tell you. I thought I might make you happy a few hours earlier.'"

Such was Starr King! It is no wonder that

the men and women, both East and West, who had the privilege of his friendship were attached to him with a passionate devotion which neither his death nor the lapse of years can diminish, and treasure his memory with gratitude and tenderness as an inspiration for their higher faith in goodness and an incentive to nobler living.



FOR A YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEETING.

ADDAMS. L. M. C. W. W.



FOR A YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEETING.

With loyal hearts and purpose strong
We raise to heaven our joyous song,
We lift our banner to the skies,
The symbol of our high emprise.

See, blazoned there, the shining goals,
The lofty aims that thrill our souls ;
To Freedom, Service, Right and Truth
We pledge the ardor of our youth.

Together let us onward press
To bring the suffering world redress,
Uphold the righteous cause, and dare
Speak truth, serve justice, everywhere.

Fired with the spirit's word of might
Let us be bearers of the light,
Our brothers help, our God adore,
Onward and upward, evermore !

1917. C. W. W.

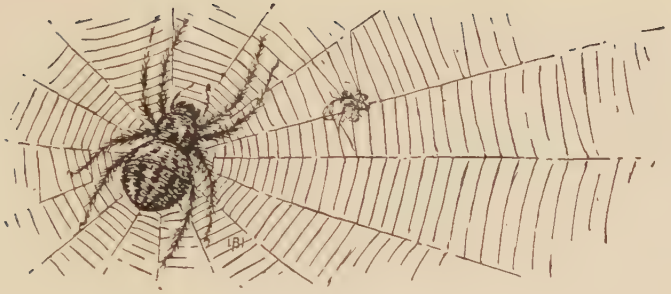
THE SPIDER

A noiseless, patient spider,
I marked, where, on a little promontory, it stood isolated;
Marked how, to explore the vacant, vast surrounding,
It launched forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself;
Ever unreeling them — ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you, O my Soul, where you stand,
Surrounded, surrounded, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, — seeking the spheres, to connect them;
Till the bridge you will need, be formed — till the ductile anchor hold;
Till the gossamer thread you fling, catch somewhere,
O my Soul.

—*Walt Whitman*

By permission of David McKay, Publisher.



THE SPIDER BOY

"THE Spider Boy," the children called him, as he lay pale and weak in his reclining chair among them, under the trees in the beautiful parks of his home city of Oakland. On sunny days his devoted nurse would wheel him thither that he might benefit by the bright California sunshine, and with the children's help collect in the surrounding woods and fields specimens of spiders, the little insect, whose structure and habits he so intently and patiently studied, and about which, as we shall see, notwithstanding his tremendous disadvantages, he had acquired a knowledge that made him an authority on the subject.

Now to most children and grown-ups "Daddy-long-legs" is a repulsive object, to be avoided and feared rather than sought after and cared

for. But not so to the young scientist John Curtis, the hero of our story, for a hero he was, though not of the militant type so much admired nowadays. Daring deeds of valor, dramatic strut and pose were not for him. His poor, frail body was paralyzed since his twelfth year from the waist down, so that he was unable to walk or sit up, and even at night had to be turned round from time to time lest he suffer from cramps in his sleep. His feeble arms and hands, his weak eyes reinforced with strong magnifying spectacles, were equal to only two or three hours use each day. Thus crippled and disabled he seemed doomed to a life of inaction and uselessness and an early death. And so it would have been but for the remarkable mind which was enshrined within that wasted frame, its consuming thirst for knowledge which no pain or disability could quench, the indomitable will which overcame every physical obstacle in its pursuit of truth and eagerness to be of service to it. What especially appealed to the admiration and sympathy of all who became acquainted with the gifted and lovable boy was his gentleness, his uncomplaining patience, and affectionate disposition. These traits won all hearts, and together with his

physical helplessness made both young and old glad to become eyes and feet and hands to him, and to aid him in carrying on the nature studies in which he found such happy occupation. It was this which sent his little helpers, the children, into fields and woods to hunt for additions to the collection of living spiders which their playmate was forming. They might wonder at his taste, but deemed themselves amply repaid for their exertions by his gratefulness, by the interesting things he told them of insect and animal life, and, above all, the delightful fairy stories which he invented for their enjoyment as they gathered around his invalid chair, stories as light in fancy and spun as deftly as is the gossamer web, sparkling with morning dew, out of which the spider weaves his aerial habitation.

John L. Curtis was born in Newville, Cal., in 1868. His father and mother removed from Minnesota to California in 1865. He was always a delicate child, but mentally active, studious and companionable. Then, as the result of sickness, paralysis crept upon him, depriving him of the use of the muscles of his body, legs and arms, except those of the wrist and hands. The twelve years preceding

his death his waking hours were passed in a wheel-chair or reclining on a couch. It was a terrible affliction for one so young, but he bore it with remarkable patience and sweetness. Unable to participate any longer in the external activities of those around him he grew inwardly strong and beautiful, developing intellectual powers and traits of character which awoke the admiration and sympathy of all who knew him. From his parents and a sister he received the most affectionate and devoted care. Their means might be limited but their capacity for loving service was great. The necessity for drawing so heavily on their attention and strength was the one great shadow on the boy's considerate and unselfish heart. Unfortunately his mother was early taken from him by death. His father also was much of an invalid, the consequence of his exposure as a soldier during the Civil War. He became the devoted attendant and companion of his afflicted son. The sister, a noble woman, attractive, cultivated and self-sacrificing, consecrated herself entirely to the care and keeping of the little family.

It was the long, unoccupied days that were the sorest trial to the poor lad. His weak eyes did not permit any large amount of reading.

His father and others read to him, but there is a limit to one's power of listening, especially in the case of an invalid. Like most boys he had an interest in things, especially living things, and had begun a miscellaneous collection of "bugs," as the children called them. This proved to be his way of salvation. When about twelve years old, aided by another boy, he captured a large spider, put it under a glass, fed it with flies, and began watching its movements and moods. Hour after hour, with ever growing interest the lonely boy watched the little companion of his solitude. He noted the skill, the cunning, the patient endeavors of the tiny creature. He began to study his habits and ways, to note his peculiarities of structure, color and movement, and his method of workmanship. This went on for a long time. In the meantime the boy's friends, glad to aid him in his purpose, brought him other specimens and procured for him books on natural history in which the structure and habits of spiders were fully described. Thus informed the boy's study of insect life acquired a new interest. Step by step the wonders of Nature were disclosed to the ardent young learner as he pressed eagerly forward to lift the veil with which she

guards her secrets. It was a very humble door through which he entered her holy of holies, but it revealed to him enough of the design and order, the beauty and grandeur of the universe to fill him with wonder, to make him its reverent student, and to furnish him happy and useful occupation during the brief remainder of his life. Henceforth whenever he was wheeled out into woods and fields by his father, or by the faithful nurse who cared for him as a mother might, it was to find along the hedgerows, or in the specimens his little accomplices, the children, gathered, new species for him to take home and study. Other varieties were sent in to him, until he had at times over seventy species under observation. He devised ingenious methods of housing, feeding and watering his spiders. He made exhaustive observations of their every habit, and recorded all in notes and the drawings which he taught his weak and cramped fingers to make with skill and delicacy. Of this the accompanying illustrations give evidence, especially the drawing of butterflies, made as an Easter gift to the present writer, which in this case also possesses a personal and symbolic significance. He learned Latin that he might be able to identify

and properly classify his specimens. He began to discover as yet unknown species, imparting this information to scientific societies and journals. Untrained, with slight resources, tormented, helpless, his patient, devoted labors enabled him to add something to our knowledge of living things, to receive the recognition of scientific circles, and to find happiness for himself in the midst of affliction. He was no longer weary for want of something to do. His only desire now was for time and strength to labor in the endless field of research which had been opened to him.

Scientific men, especially in the department of entomology, began to take an interest in their young fellow-worker, especially when they learned the circumstances under which his researches were made. After three years of delighted, absorbing study his eyes so failed him that he was able to devote thereafter only one half-hour a day to microscopic investigations. How minute and laborious these investigations were is shown by an article on "A New Jumping Spider" which he wrote after long and careful study, and which fills over four closely printed pages of *Zoe*, a biological journal of San Francisco. It is a remarkable record of keen observ-

ing powers and thorough methods of work. The description is too detailed for quotation, but a few general remarks taken from the close of the article may be given, and will show how pleasantly he could write on his favorite theme. In these days of airmen and flying machines it possesses a special interest. "*Dendryphantes Aeneolus* [the scientific name of this particular variety] is one of our so-called flying spiders, the young being especially given to that method of locomotion. Often, when sitting in the garden, I have had one alight on my book, crawl to the top of my uplifted finger or pencil, and fly away on its web, or make it a bridge to some other and usually higher point. The way of getting upon the breeze is in principle the same as with all other flyers. Arrived at the top of an elevation the spider raises its spinnerets and emits from them a thread, which the wind is allowed to carry far enough to bear it on. If this is successful it flies, but if the thread catches anywhere it simply fastens it where it stands, draws it in, as it were hand over hand, until taut, and then crawls upon it to the other end of its attachment. In most cases the flying-line flows out from its posterior spinnerets, while from the anterior pair another

thread is drawn and fastened to the point upon which the insect is standing, so that it may have a line by which to return if the flying venture, at first successful, should afterward end in failure. If the flying-line catches the extra line simply strengthens the first end of it, or affords a way of return if it should break. It is easy to see that this way of travelling must be exceedingly advantageous to these spiders, not only because of the ease and speed which the web-bridge allows in crossing water, desert places, patches of grass or clover, or other obstructed routes, but also because of the much greater speed and safety afforded when it is actually in flight."

The article ends with an amusing account of an encounter between a California lizard and one of these flying spiders, and the ingenious manner in which the latter escaped the threatened danger, showing, as he says, "considerable intelligence on the part of the spider."

The Entomological Section of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia caused to be printed an account of a new spider discovered by the young observer, which includes also his studies of twenty-six instances of the effect of the poison of spiders, and the process

of forming cocoons. The latter he was able to study by the aid of mirrors arranged about a captive female of the species and by close microscopic inspection.

The name of the young nature enthusiast now began to be known in larger scientific circles. The science teachers at the California colleges, especially Prof. Vernon L. Kellogg of Leland Stanford, Jr., University, became much interested in his investigations, as well as in the lad himself. From England came a gift of several volumes of entomological researches by one of the great authorities, Professor Thorold. A crowning distinction was the naming of a new species after the young discoverer himself.

In the meantime the latter did not allow himself to become altogether absorbed in his nature work, to the exclusion of all other concerns. His general intellectual culture and his moral and spiritual growth kept pace with his studies as a specialist. The deeper he penetrated into the "open secrets" of the material universe the more reverent became his spirit; the wider his survey, the stronger became his faith in the all-wise, all-good ordering of the nature of things. He read, so far as his strength would allow, the epoch-making writings of Dar-

win, Tyndall, Huxley, Le Conte and other exponents of the new scientific philosophy of the method of creation. With growing insight he accepted the principle of evolution as the explanation of the life and development of the universe. This led to a corresponding change in his religious views. He had been reared in the current doctrines concerning the miraculous creation and arbitrary government of the world. But these no longer satisfied his intellect or comforted his heart. He sought a larger, freer, a more rational form of belief which, while it surrendered nothing that was essential to the spiritual and ethical life of man, reverently accepted the new and assured knowledge of our time and made it the basis for a better interpretation of nature and of life. John Curtis, no longer a boy, but arrived at young manhood, found this more adequate faith in Liberal Christianity. With his like-minded father and sister he attended the church in Oakland which preeminently represented this larger view of nature, and nature's God. This brought him into close personal and pastoral relations with its minister. Together they discussed the great problems of the presence of evil and suffering in the universe, the disciplinary use of pain and sor-

row, the compensations of virtue, love and service, the light cast on the pathway of mankind by the hope of immortality and trust in the Eternal Goodness. Whatever help or comfort the brave young seeker may have derived from these conversations and from the services at the church, it was the minister who was most benefitted by his friendship with John Curtis. It was impossible to look down on Sunday upon his pale, thoughtful face, as he lay reclining in his wheel-chair, in front of the pulpit, or to exchange ideas and sentiments with him in the closer intimacies of friendship, without becoming himself better, purer-minded and more humbly grateful for the privileges of life and human intercourse. The unconscious ministry of this almost disembodied spirit was more effectual than any sermon.

Writing to his ministerial friend in the summer of 1889, young Curtis tells him: "I received your letter about the books last week, and was much delighted to hear that the 'Spiders of Dorset' in all probability had arrived from England.

"My sister went to get them. They were not there, however. So I fear they were not sent or missent. I thought you would like it best

if I should write you about it while you were in Boston, so that you might inquire at headquarters. I am looking forward to them with great pleasure, and this delay will only lengthen the pleasure of expectation, only I am sorry to trouble you so much. It seemed lonely to come back to Oakland and find you gone. I felt like an orphan disciple! I hope you and your mother will be well while you are away, so as to get all the pleasure possible from the journey and outing.

"Our own trip into the country was a most enjoyable one, and we came back full of freshness and strength. I enjoyed it more than my sister, I think, because I had my usual comforts, which she, for my sake, did not have. We lived out-of-doors when we could, and when we could not we read and studied indoors. It was an entirely new experience for me and the great mountain and lesser hills about, the vineyards, orchards and hayfields, and, above all, the country people with their good, kind hearts, were a continual revelation to me. What was an especial delight, and made me very happy, was *eleven new specimens of spiders!*

"I have been able to be very busy since I came back, and am making my studies, obser-

vations and spider-notes fly as I have not for a long time past."

On Easter Sunday, 1892, a group of over fifty persons, young and old, united with the church in Oakland of which the writer was pastor. Among these was John L. Curtis. The occasion was one never to be forgotten by those who participated. The beautiful new church edifice, decorated with the wealth of lilies, roses and other blossoms which the floral profusion of a California Spring makes possible, the crowded congregation, the joyous carols of the children and choir, and before the altar the candidates for admission to the fellowship of the church and the Christian communion throughout the world — all formed an impressive picture. To each new member in turn the minister gave his personal handclasp and greeting, while their acceptance as a whole was ratified by a rising vote of the congregation. But when he came to where his dear young friend John Curtis lay pale and helpless on his wheel-chair, the minister's voice broke; unable to utter his welcome he stooped and kissed the pure, upturned face, while a wave of sympathetic emotion swept over the assembly.

"The Spider Boy's" life now drew speedily

to a close. His physical strength was well-nigh exhausted. The eager mind had drawn too heavily on its small store of vitality. He began to realize that he would not be able to complete the task he had set himself, among other things a book on the Spiders of California. But he bore his disappointment bravely and uncomplainingly, gave up his beloved researches, said goodbye to the little companions who had so long been the object of his interest and care, and prepared calmly and trustfully for the new life in God which he believed awaited him.

In January, 1893, the young nature student passed from the limitations of earth to the larger freedom and insight of Eternity. The original spider, which had first awakened his interest and led him into the Kingdom of Nature, survived him.

